

HN  
80  
A2  
W4

U.C.I.

D

0003048360













# The University of Minnesota

CURRENT PROBLEMS

NUMBER 4

## SOCIAL AND ECONOMIC SURVEY OF A COMMUNITY IN THE RED RIVER VALLEY

BY

LOUIS DWIGHT HARVELL WELD, Ph.D.

Assistant Professor of Economics, Chief of the Division of Research  
in Agricultural Economics

*Geo. S. Nehrwald*



MINNEAPOLIS

Published by the University of Minnesota  
January 1915

COPYRIGHT 1915  
THE UNIVERSITY OF MINNESOTA



Started Mar 11/16  
G. S. W.

## PREFACE

In selecting localities for the social and economic surveys conducted by the Division of Research in Agricultural Economics of the University of Minnesota, it has been the object to choose communities that are typical of different sections of the State. The first, published in 1913, covered a township in southeastern Minnesota which is representative of those regions where diversified farming and dairying have reached a fairly high state of development. The community selected for this survey is in the Red River Valley, near Crookston, and is typical of the large-farm, grain-growing section of Minnesota. The farming community covered does not represent the very best section of the valley; better-kept farms and more fertile soil are to be found nearer the river itself, and on the Dakota side. The section covered in the survey includes not only land with rich "gumbo" soil, but also sandy land where farming has not developed to so high a point. On the whole this community is typical of the average Red River Valley community in that it stands midway between the most highly developed parts of the valley and the poorer parts.

This survey and the one taken simultaneously in the "cut-over" potato section in eastern Minnesota, differ from that previously described in that an attempt has been made to include both a farming and a village community instead of a farming community alone. A village has been selected as the center of economic activities, and the territory covered is that which is tributary to the village, that is, the territory which uses the village both as a shipping point and as a place in which to buy supplies and professional services. In this way it has been intended not only to bring out a comparison between life on the farm and life in a small Minnesota village, but also to bring out the economic dependence of the one on the other. In this survey it was found that the differentiation between village life and farm life had developed to so great an extent that the two are treated separately in the presentation of the data. In the eastern Minnesota survey, on the other hand, the village life and farm life are carried along together.

The object of these surveys is to subject to statistical measurement certain rural social and economic forces in order to furnish more exact data as a foundation for constructive programs of rural betterment. No attempt is made in the presentation of these reports to offer such constructive programs, principally because the data obtained are confined to such restricted localities that it would be dangerous to make broad generalizations. It is hoped, however, that as these studies continue, and comparisons of

conditions in different communities are thus made possible, certain fundamental facts will gradually unfold, with the result that sane and definite methods of procedure may be evolved. In the meantime it is also hoped that the facts set forth will not only prove suggestive to those who are studying the rural-life problem, but that these facts may also furnish definite evidence, either corroborative or adverse, as to the wisdom of policies and theories that they may be advocating.

This series of surveys was originally planned by Mr. C. W. Thompson, formerly Director of the Bureau of Research in Agricultural Economics, University of Minnesota, but since June, 1913, with the Rural Organization Service. The preliminary arrangements for this survey and the detailed planning of the schedules and methods of procedure were perfected by Mr. Thompson before his resignation from the University of Minnesota. It should also be stated that Mr. Thompson has given generously of his time in reading manuscript and in giving valuable counsel throughout the preparation of this report. The field work was performed during the summer of 1913 by the author, assisted by Mr. C. A. Halverson. The able assistance of Miss Olga Axness in working up the statistical results from field notes is gratefully acknowledged.

L. D. H. WELD,  
*Chief of Division*

note:  
but two observed

## CONTENTS

	Page
Chapter I. Historical Sketch and General Conditions.....	1
Chapter II. How the Farming Community Lives.....	24
Chapter III. Marketing of Farm Products.....	36
Chapter IV. The Stores and Industries of the Village.....	52
Chapter V. How the Village People Live.....	71
Summary .....	84



Map of the Community Covered by the Survey

# SOCIAL AND ECONOMIC SURVEY OF A COMMUNITY IN THE RED RIVER VALLEY

## CHAPTER I

### HISTORICAL SKETCH AND GENERAL CONDITIONS

Scientists tell us that following the glacial period as the ice melted and retreated toward the north, what is now the Red River Valley was the southern arm of Lake Agassiz, whose surplus water flowed south through Bigstone Lake and the Minnesota River into the Mississippi. This arm of the lake averaged about forty miles in breadth, and, as the ice dam to the north gradually receded, the water in the lake fell. The heavy gravel and sand were deposited on a series of beaches which represent the levels



The Prairie; Timber along Stream in Distance

at which the water stood at different periods. The finer materials, silt and clay, were deposited in the deeper waters. As time went on the level of the lake became lower than the southern outlet and water began to flow northward. Finally, with the disappearance of the ice, the lake became dry, leaving only the Red River of the North with its tributaries flowing into Lake Winnipeg, a representative of the early Lake Agassiz, and finally emptying into Hudson Bay.

The community studied in this survey is located on land previously covered by this pre-glacial lake, and extends to within about seven miles

of the Red River. The country is exceedingly flat, the vision being broken only by timber along the streams, or that planted for windbreaks on the prairie farms. The gradual recessions of the lake explain the soil conditions in this community. In most of the territory covered the soil is a rich, dark, heavy, loam, or "gumbo"; on the east the soil gradually becomes sandy as a low-lying ridge is approached which formed one of the beaches of the early lake. Two tributaries of the Red River, the Marsh and the Wild Rice rivers, flow through the district as shown on the frontispiece map. The Marsh River is a small and rather unimportant stream; the Wild Rice River is a larger river, having its source among the lakes and swamps from eighty to a hundred miles east of the Red River. The beds of both streams are but little below the level of the prairie, and consequently easily overflow their banks, oftentimes causing floods which cover a considerable part of the territory studied.

The Red River Valley was included in the grant to the Hudson's Bay Company when it was formed in 1670.<sup>1</sup> During the eighteenth and a large part of the nineteenth century the fur trade was predominant through all this northern country. It was not until 1800 that permanent settlers appeared and cultivated the soil, notably those whom Lork Selkirk brought from Scotland and northern Ireland in 1811. The present boundary between Canada and the United States was not fixed until 1818, and at that time many of the original settlement moved north of the boundary into Canada. Although the fur trade continued to be the most important source of livelihood, farming was carried on to a greater or less degree, increasing gradually during the first half of the nineteenth century. The market for farm products, which consisted largely of vegetables, was toward the north, where the Hudson's Bay Company required large quantities of supplies.

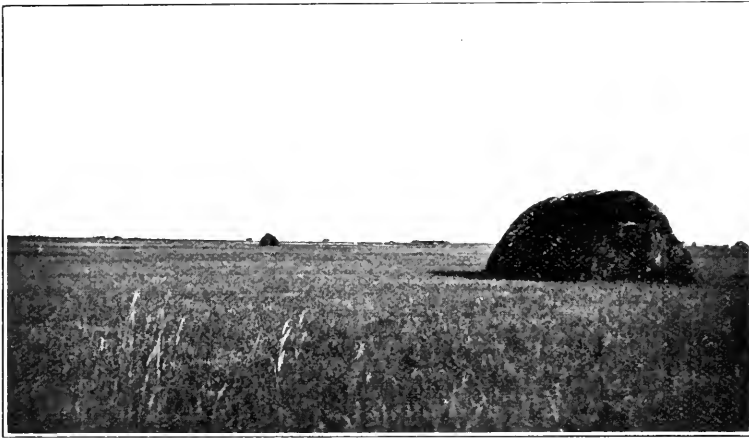
By the early fifties trade began to grow up between this section and southeastern Minnesota, which had just begun to be populated. Cartloads of furs were hauled five hundred miles across country to St. Paul to be exchanged for manufactured articles. In 1857 the Hudson's Bay Company began bringing supplies to Canada in boats by way of the Minnesota River and the Red River of the North, thus augmenting this trade. It is said that there were six thousand carts in use in this traffic by 1858. In 1859 a stagecoach began to operate between the head of navigation and St. Cloud, which was reached by boat from St. Paul. In this same year the first steamer made its appearance on the river. Previous to 1881 Norman County, which includes the territory surveyed, was a part of Polk County. In 1860 the Federal Census showed that Polk County had 2,100 acres of land in farms, of which 400 were improved. The principal crops as measured by the number of bushels in order of their importance were corn (!),

<sup>1</sup>The historical data herein contained were taken largely from *The Economic History of the Red River Valley* by J. L. Coulter.

potatoes, oats, wheat, and rye. It was also reported that small quantities of butter, cheese, tobacco, maple sugar, barley, hay, and slaughtered animals were produced.

During the Civil War Indian massacres occurred in the Red River Valley; the steamboats stopped running; the stagecoach was attacked and looted; agriculture was abandoned; and the settlements were practically deserted. It was not until after the Civil War that settlers again began to come into the Red River Valley, the westward movement of population in the United States reaching this section about 1870.

Railroad-building began in Minnesota during the War; by 1867 the St. Paul and Pacific Railroad was built to St. Cloud and in 1871 it was pushed through to Breckenridge, thus connecting St. Paul with the head of



Unbroken Prairie Held by Speculators. Farmers Purchase the Right to Cut Hay

navigation on the Red River. Stagecoaches ran north and south through the valley to Winnipeg, and steamer traffic increased. In 1871 the Northern Pacific was finished across the State from Duluth to Moorhead, only thirty miles south of the locality studied in this survey.

In 1870 there were only 2,206 whites in the Red River Valley south of the international boundary. The census returns for that year showed that agriculture was making inroads on the fur business, and that a diversified system of farming was being developed in the valley. It is curious to note that for the first few years of active settlement diversified farming was the rule. The reasons assigned for this by J. L. Coulter in his *Economic History of the Red River Valley* were that railroad rates were too high to get grain to market and to bring supplies from distant markets, and that the ravages of grasshoppers discouraged grain culture. The grass-

hoppers came in large numbers during the early seventies and all possible attempts were made to eradicate this pest. Finally in 1877 they suddenly disappeared and have never come again in numbers large enough to do any considerable harm. This period of diversified agriculture lasted until about 1876.

Then came the one-crop system and the bonanza farms for which the Red River Valley is famous. The Dalrymple farms on the Dakota side were first cultivated in 1876. The Grandin and others were started soon after. Although the region surrounding Ada was never included in any of these immense farms, one of the Grandin farms is only about fifteen miles to the west. The fame of these bonanza farms quickly spread, causing an influx of settlers and a mania for large farms and grain culture. The bonanza farm, however, was the exception; there were comparatively few that ran over two or three thousand acres apiece. The land in the particular district covered by the survey was taken up by comparatively small farmers, although a farm of five hundred acres in those days was not considered a large farm.

#### RAILROAD DEVELOPMENT

In 1872 there were three steamers and six barges on the river. In that year tracks were first laid northward through the valley from Glyndon on the Northern Pacific through Ada, and to a point north of Crookston on the Red Lake River. A few trains were run this first season, but the road was closed for the winter. A flat car with masts and sails was constructed by the settlers, who thereby transported such necessities as they needed. Trains continued to be run only in summer for four or five years, the panic of 1873 retarding railroad operations, but not appreciably retarding the incoming of settlers.

By 1878 the St. Paul and Pacific was continued northward to the Canadian boundary, meeting the Canadian Pacific at that point. Winnipeg was now connected by railroad with Minneapolis and St. Paul. The day of the stage-coach and the river steamer was over.

Mr. J. J. Hill had been engaged in the river traffic since 1871. In 1879 he reorganized the north and south line under the name of St. Paul, Minneapolis, and Manitoba Railway, and began to develop the system which later became the Great Northern. In that year through connection was made to Minneapolis and St. Paul via Fergus Falls.

Further railroad developments that particularly affected the district with which we are concerned were the building in 1883-1884 of a branch line north from Moorhead along the river to Halstad only fourteen miles west of Ada. Finally another north and south line, now the Northern Pacific, was built fourteen miles east of Ada in 1886. The building of these two lines on the west and east respectively reduced the territory tribu-



tary to Ada, which has never become the important city that the early settlers hoped. For many years they thought that an east and west line would make the town a junction point, and frequent rumors to this effect persisted even until the early nineties. No such road has ever materialized, however, and the village remains the shipping and supply point of a farming community which is more or less restricted in area, due to the presence of railroads fourteen miles away on either side.

#### GENERAL AGRICULTURAL CONDITIONS

The principal facts with regard to the general organization of agriculture and the changes that have taken place since 1890 are shown in the tables below, which are compiled from United States census returns for Norman County, in which county the community under consideration is located. For comparative purposes the figures for 1910 include also Mahanomen County, which was formed from a part of Norman County in 1906.

TABLE I

GENERAL AGRICULTURAL STATISTICS OF NORMAN COUNTY FOR 1890, 1900, AND 1910  
(INCLUDING MAHANOMEN COUNTY FOR 1910)

	1890	1900	1910
Number of farms.....	1,698	1,938	1,901
Land in farms (acres).....	323,191	428,985	460,529
Average number of acres per farm.....	190	221	242
Improved land in farms (acres).....	182,628	316,597	338,901
Percentage of land improved.....	56.5	73.8	73.6
Value of land and improvements.....	\$3,320,280	\$6,882,260	\$17,605,282
Value per acre of land in farms.....	\$10.27	\$16.04	\$38.23
Value of buildings.....		\$1,120,750	\$2,631,554
Value of implements and machinery.....	\$261,390	\$456,750	\$681,664
Value of machinery per farm.....	\$154	\$236	\$359
Value of live stock.....	\$751,490	\$1,155,870	\$1,936,748

The average size of farms in the county has been increasing, while the actual number of farms has decreased between 1900 and 1910. The average size of farms included in the survey is 291.2 acres, or 50 acres larger than the average for the county. Eighteen of the 201 farms visited have 500 acres or more, and one has 1,000 acres. Many of the farmers are "land crazy," and seem to have an ambition to add to their acreage.

The value of land and improvements in the county has increased from an average of \$10.27 per acre in 1890 to \$38.23 in 1910. The value of land in farms covered by this survey in 1913 ranged from \$40 to \$60 or \$70 per acre, with an approximate average of \$50 per acre. Improved land constitutes 70.2 per cent of the area of the farms visited. It will be noticed from the census figures in the table above that the total value of

buildings and the value of buildings per farm in this county more than doubled between 1900 and 1910.

### CROPS

Changes that have taken place in agricultural methods are indicated by the following tables which show the principal crops and the condition of the live-stock industry in Norman County for the last three decennial census years.

TABLE II  
PRINCIPAL CROPS OF NORMAN COUNTY 1889, 1899, AND 1909 (INCLUDING MAHONOMEN COUNTY FOR 1909)

	1889		1899		1909	
	Acres	Bushels	Acres	Bushels	Acres	Bushels
Barley.....	3,691	56,051	8,781	202,820	33,348	707,779
Corn.....	143	2,544	450	12,790	2,359	66,950
Oats.....	23,438	315,403	31,676	754,550	55,814	1,417,324
Rye.....	56	530	150	2,120	2,919	48,727
Wheat.....	107,415	1,233,249	137,419	1,459,030	84,885	1,265,739
Potatoes.....	903	71,159	858	96,881	1,514	165,118
	Acres	Tons	Acres	Tons	Acres	Tons
Hay and forage....	52,876	29,713	59,941	62,740	72,704	72,006

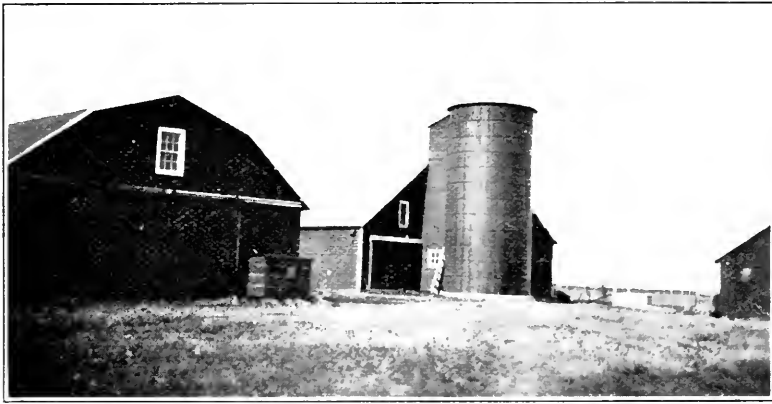
TABLE III  
PRINCIPAL ANIMALS ON FARMS IN NORMAN COUNTY 1890, 1900, AND 1910 (INCLUDING MAHONOMEN COUNTY FOR 1910)

	1890	1900	1910
Working oxen.....	1,089		
Milch cows.....	7,208	8,972	13,101
Other cattle.....	9,328	12,736	15,513
Total cattle.....	17,625	21,708	28,614
Horses.....	5,987	11,350	11,009
Sheep.....	4,908	6,129	6,225
Swine.....	4,129	6,777	6,173
Poultry (all kinds).....	41,771	69,443	106,234

The most prominent features of the agricultural methods of this community are the dependence on grain-farming and the relative backwardness of the live-stock and dairy industry. Wheat is the most important crop both in acreage and in value, though oats exceeded wheat in 1909 in number of bushels produced. Comparison with earlier years indicates that the

acreage devoted to wheat has fallen off substantially, and that other field crops, notably barley and oats, have largely taken its place.

Corn is raised to only a small extent, although the acreage for the county in 1909 was a great deal larger than in 1899, and the figures obtained during the survey indicate that corn-growing has increased very rapidly since 1909. In fact the total number of acres planted to corn in 1913 by the 201 farmers visited was 2,463, an amount actually larger than the acreage for the whole county in 1909, according to the census figures. This phenomenal increase is due to three causes: first, a decided agitation for the production of more corn that is sweeping through the Red River Valley; second, the influence of the agricultural instructor in the local high school; and, third, the need of cultivated crops to kill off noxious weeds that infest the land. Of the 201 farms visited there were 146, or



The Only Silo in the Community Covered by the Survey

72.6 per cent, that reported some corn. The average acreage of corn for these 146 farms was 16.9. There were two farms with 60 acres each planted in 1913; one with 50 acres; two with 45 acres; and six with 40 acres. There were a great many who had planted only from 5 to 10 acres, apparently with the idea of trying it as an experiment. Judging from the general sentiment, the farmers will undoubtedly increase their acreage rapidly in the future. There was but one farm of all those visited that had a silo, and this had just been built. There are numerous other farmers, however, that are contemplating the building of silos in the near future.

Potato-growing has not become important in this section, although the census figures show that it is increasing. Of course practically all families raise potatoes for their own consumption, and a few raise more than they need in order to trade them at the stores in the village; but not more than seven or eight farmers among those visited really raise them

on a commercial basis. Two of these had 85 acres apiece in 1913; the rest had less than 30 acres apiece.

#### CROPPING SYSTEMS

It has already been pointed out from the census figures that there has been a decided decrease in the acreage devoted to wheat since 1899, and that barley and oats have been largely substituted in its place. This change has been helpful in reducing the competition of crops for the farmer's labor during the rush seasons, as well as in cutting down the risk due to certain plant diseases, but it has not helped to build up or maintain the productivity of the soil, for all of these crops remove about the same kind and amount of soil fertility and leave the soil in the same physical condition. The straw has been burned after threshing, and even { the stubbles have met with a similar fate; as a result the vegetable matter has been depleted to such an extent that much of the soil is in very poor physical condition. At present many farmers allow their straw piles to decay and then spread them back on the fields, but even now the frequent bonfires illuminating the heavens at night indicate that there still remain some who have no adequate conception of what conservation of soil fertility means.

Along with the depletion of vegetable matter has gone a decrease in the nitrogen content. Little has been done in the way of growing leguminous crops to counteract this decrease. There is a common belief among many of the farmers that clover or alfalfa will not grow in the Red River Valley on account of the severe winters. The snowfall is often meager, and the stormy winds, sweeping over the flat fields, pile much of the snow up along the roads and fences, leaving the fields unprotected against the heavy frosts. Several small fields with good stands of clover were found, however, and a number of successful alfalfa plots had been recently started, some of them through the efforts of the agricultural department of the high school. It seems, therefore, that clover and alfalfa are destined to play an important rôle in the cropping systems of the future. Indeed, it is difficult to see how the community can continue to prosper without them. But it will require persistent effort and more hearty coöperation between landlord and tenant to establish firmly these leguminous crops. Tenants who have only a one-year lease do not spend money and effort on enterprises, the benefits of which are likely to be reaped by someone else. Landlords must show more liberality in the way of inducements before their tenants will grow those crops which, while they may bring in a smaller immediate return, will increase the producing capacity of the soil. Under present unsettled conditions, when land changes hands so frequently, progress in this direction can not be expected to be very rapid, but some landlords are showing an interest in this problem.

Burn  
Cotton

want +  
indland  
problem

Corn is undoubtedly the crop that is growing most rapidly in favor. Farmers coming in from Iowa, Illinois, and southern Minnesota have given a great impetus to corn culture. Many landlords residing in the sections just named, but owning land in the territory covered by this survey, offer their tenants the free use of land devoted to corn, stipulating of course that the ground must be kept free from weeds. They find it profitable to do this because, as a rule, land on which corn has been grown will yield much better the next year. This is due to the fact that thorough cultivation kills many of the weeds, and also aerates the soil and puts it in better condition for the crops that follow.

Much of the land included in the survey is badly infested with weeds. The most troublesome annual weeds are wild oats and kinghead. Quack grass and Canada thistle are the two most troublesome perennial weeds, but neither of these is as prevalent as wild oats and kinghead. Some fields sown to small grain were found in which the wild oats had absolute control. Conditions in this respect would be improved if more cultivated crops and less small grain were grown.

#### LIVE STOCK

That mixed farming is slowly developing is shown by the increase in cattle. The number of dairy cows in the county increased 46 per cent between 1900 and 1910, and the number of other cattle, 21.8 per cent. And yet the average number of dairy cows per farm on the farms visited during the survey is only 4.9, while for the state of Minnesota as a whole it was 6.9 in 1909. Sheep- and hog-raising are only holding their own. Ten per cent of the farms reported sheep, with an average of twelve per farm. One hundred and thirty-eight farms, or only 68.6 per cent of all those visited, reported mature hogs. This represents approximately the number that breed hogs, and these farms had an average of 3.2 mature hogs apiece. Many families buy pigs to raise during the summer and fall, and slaughter them for their own consumption during the winter and spring. Poultry-raising is increasing rapidly, but very little attention is paid either to breeding or to proper housing.

Comparatively little attention has been given to breeding. Eighty-nine farms, or 44.2 per cent, keep bulls, of which eighteen are claimed to be of pure blood. The bulls may be classified as follows:

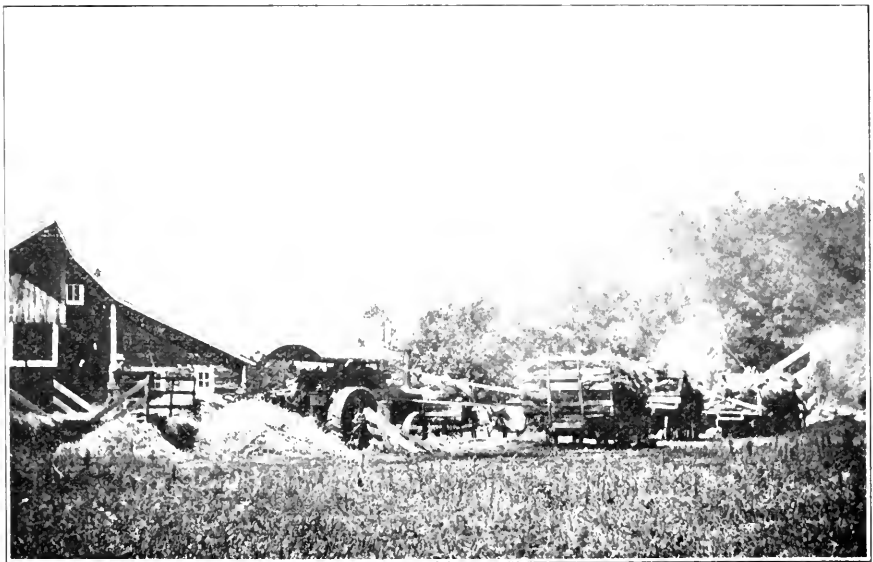
Pure-bred Holstein .....	6
Pure-bred Hereford .....	5
Pure-bred Short Horn .....	3
Pure-bred Red Poll .....	2
Pure-bred Angus .....	1
Pure-bred Jersey .....	1

Grade Holstein .....	2
Grade Jersey .....	2
Grade Short Horn and scrub.....	67
<hr/>	
Total .....	89

The prevailing stock is Short Horn. Some of the grade Short Horn bulls are of very good quality, but most of them are of the scrub variety. The dual purpose idea is predominant; the few who have gone into pure-bred stock are about evenly divided between dairy and beef types. A very excellent herd of Aberdeen Angus cattle, just imported, represents the most noticeable effort toward live-stock improvement found in the community.

#### FARM MACHINERY

The use of farm machinery is of special interest in this section because it is on the flat prairies of the Red River Valley that the highest



Threshing Scene

development in the use of farm machinery has been reached. This community offers little of interest, however, in the historical development of farm machinery because most of the important inventions came about before this part of the State was settled. This is true of the steam threshing outfit and the binder. At present only three of the farmers visited own their own threshing machines. Men in the village own machines and go

about from farm to farm during the harvesting season. The farmers help each other during harvesting, thus offering an interesting example of informal coöperation. That the ownership and use of farm machinery are increasing is evident from the fact that the value of implements and machinery per farm in the whole county increased from \$236 in 1900 to \$359 in 1910. (See Table I.)

Most of the farmers plow with horses. In the early days oxen were commonly used. Many of the original settlers drove into the country with oxen; some sold their oxen to settlers who were going farther west. Oxen gradually disappeared, although there were 1,089 reported in the county as late as 1890. One farmer included in this survey still does his farm work with oxen and even hauls his grain to market with them. The reason he gave was that oxen furnish cheaper power than horses. He had moved



These Plows are Coming into Common Use

in a few years before from the cut-over section of northern Minnesota. In recent years traction engines have been displacing horses in plowing, and gang plows which turn from eight to twelve furrows are in use. Out of the 201 farms visited, 15, or 7.5 per cent, have tractors of their own. Eight of these are steam tractors, and seven are gasoline. Other farmers hire tractors for their plowing. Gasoline tractors are commonly used for plowing, while the steam tractors are mostly used for threshing.

As for other machinery, practically all farmers own binders. Those most commonly used in the community are seven- or eight-foot cuts, pulled by four horses. Only a few farmers were found using the big twelve-foot binders, with the power applied behind instead of in front. The users of

these big push binders were enthusiastic over the results they were obtaining, one man claiming he could cut as much grain a day alone with six horses as two men with eight horses could harvest using the seven-foot binders. While this proportion possibly would not hold as an average, there can be little doubt that the big machines economize manual labor appreciably. One third of those visited own manure spreaders, and this is a recent development. The number of acres over which manure had been spread during the season 1912-1913 averaged 13.7 for all farms included in the survey. Nineteen per cent of all farmers visited have forges and do a substantial part of their own blacksmithing. Most of the farms have cream separators; whole milk is not taken to the creamery at all.

NATIONALITIES OF HEADS OF FAMILIES  
Percentage of Total

Norwegian	47.8%	
German	26.7%	
American	13.7%	
All others	11.8%	

NATIONALITY

The nationality of this community is predominantly Scandinavian. The census figures show that the population for the whole county in which this community is located was 13,446 in 1910; that 11.7 per cent were native-born of native parents; that 60 per cent were native-born of foreign or mixed parentage; and that 28.3 per cent were foreign-born. Of the foreign-born 77.8 per cent were Norwegian, and of the native-born of foreign parentage, 79.3 per cent were Norwegian. Of the other nationalities, Germans were the most numerous.

In the following table, which shows the nationalities of heads of families in the region covered by this survey, the figures for each country indicate not only those who were actually born in that country, but also those whose parents were born in that country. In other words, no attempt is made to distinguish between "foreign-born" and "native-born of foreign parents."



TABLE IV  
NATIONALITY OF HEADS OF FAMILIES

NATIONALITY	COUNTRY		VILLAGE		TOTAL	
	Number	Per cent of total	Number	Per cent of total	Number	Per cent of total
Norwegian.....	96	47.8	96	47.8	192	47.8
German.....	61	30.3	45	22.4	106	26.7
American.....	22	10.8	33	16.4	55	13.7
Swedish.....	9	4.4	3	1.5	12	3.0
Irish.....	4	2.0	4	2.0	8	2.0
Swiss.....	3	1.5	5	2.5	8	2.0
English.....	0	.....	5	2.5	5	1.2
Canadian.....	0	.....	4	2.0	4	1.0
Danish.....	2	1.0	2	1.0	4	1.0
French.....	2	1.0	1	0.5	3	0.8
Scotch.....	1	0.5	1	0.5	2	0.5
Polish.....	1	0.5	0	.....	1	*
Welsh.....	0	.....	1	0.5	1	*
Jewish.....	0	.....	1	0.5	1	*
Totals.....	201	99.8	201	100.1	402	100.0

\*Less than 0.5%.

It is shown by the preceding table that nearly half of the families visited are Norwegian, and that the proportion is the same in both country and village. Germans form over one fourth of the total, and nearly one third of those on farms. Pure Americans form only 13.7 per cent of the total and are more numerous in the village than in the country. These three nationalities form 88.2 per cent of the total.

#### OWNERSHIP AND TENANCY

For the county as a whole, according to census reports 20.4 per cent of the farms were operated by tenants in 1910 as compared with only 11.8 per cent in 1900. Of the 201 families covered by the survey, 70, or 34.5 per cent, were renters, a fact which indicates that tenancy is more common in this particular section than in the rest of the county. Of the 133 families who own their farms, 25 operate rented land in addition. Share tenancy prevails, the owner and renter each receiving half of the product of the farm, and dividing the expenses of seed, twine, and threshing.

The increase of tenancy in this section is causing alarm among the farmers and townspeople, and the activity of land speculators is perhaps the one thing above all others that is complained of most bitterly. The reason generally assigned for the growth of tenancy is that old settlers who obtained their land for practically nothing have been induced to sell by what seems to them the generous offers of the land men. These land men often make large profits on single transactions. Five dollars an acre is a small

profit for them; it more commonly runs up to ten dollars an acre, and sometimes to fifteen or twenty dollars. Many a retired farmer in the village deplores the fact that he ever sold out; and farmers still on the land complain most bitterly of the operations of the land speculators.

Some of the owners of rented land live in the neighborhood, exercise a general supervision over their tenants, and keep the farm buildings in good repair. More commonly the owners live at a distance; they consider themselves only temporary owners and consequently follow the short-sighted policy of allowing the buildings to run down and of encouraging their renters to farm for immediate profit rather than for ultimate development and improvement. As leases run for only one year, renters need little encouragement to exploit the lands under the one-crop system. One efficient farmer was found who had rented the same land for eleven years in succession, but the farm had changed hands within the year preceding the investigation and the new owner had already begun to neglect the farm buildings and to insist on a system of cropping that would yield more immediate returns, with the result that this desirable tenant was contemplating a change.

#### SCHOOLS

The village has a good high school where courses are given in agriculture, domestic science, and manual training; there is also a normal department. Outside of the village, the territory covered by the survey is included mainly in thirteen school districts, each with a typical country school. There are no consolidated schools in this territory, although the establishment of such a school is being seriously considered in one township. The great distances between farms, involving long-distance hauls, and the lack of interest on the part of farmers who live near the present schools, appear to be factors that stand in the way of the consolidated-school movement. Most of the farmers do not like to send their children to town schools. As one expressed it, "The village schools educate the children away from the farm." There is a feeling among some farmers that nine months is too long a period for school to be in session. Others complain that the schools try to teach too many different subjects, and none thoroughly enough; still others are perfectly satisfied with the schools as they are and see no need of any changes. The principal facts with regard to seventeen rural schools in this locality appear in the following table:

TABLE V  
FACTS CONCERNING RURAL SCHOOL BY SCHOOL DISTRICTS

	No. 48	No. 49	No. 51	No. 68	No. 78	No. 6	No. 24	No. 67	No. 34	No. 45	No. 32	No. 22	No. 73	No. 19	No. 20	No. 88	No. 23
Enrollment.....	25	20	32	20	9	22	10	10	26	17	29	24	11	26	20	22	17
Months of school.....	8	8	8	8	6	8	5	5	8	8	8	8	7	6	7	8	8
Grade of teacher.....	1st	1st	1st	1st	2d	2d	3d	2d	1st	1st	1st	1st	2d	2d	2d	1st	1st
Salary of teacher.....	\$50	\$50	\$55	\$45- \$50	\$45	\$47.50	\$45	\$40	\$60	\$50	\$55	\$50	\$45- \$50	\$45	\$50	\$50	\$50
Months of previous teaching experience.....	0	15	40	0	0	18	6	12	**	14	72	16	14	0	14	8	0
Teacher pays for board and room per month.....	\$10	\$12	\$12	\$10	\$12	\$10	\$10	\$6	{ Lived at home }	\$12	***	***	\$10	\$10	\$14	\$10	\$12
Does teacher do own janitor work?.....	Yes	No	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	No	***	Yes	Yes	{ **** } No	Yes	Yes	Yes
Nationality of teacher.....	Nor.	Nor.	Nor.	Nor.	Nor.	Nor.	Nor.	Nor.	Nor.	Nor.	Nor.	Nor.	Nor.	Nor.	Ger.	Nor.	Ger.
Age of teacher.....	20-25	20-25	20-25	20-25	20-25	20-25	20-25	20	Over 25	Under 25	Over 25	Over 25	Under 25	Under 25	20-25	20-25	20-25
Tax levy (mills).....	10.0	9.0	8.4	4.3	6.0	6.1	5.0	x	5.06	2.5	3.8	3.0	7.2	3.0	9.5	4.5	4.0
Total tax levy for schools.....	\$600	\$548	\$355	\$250	\$250	\$350	\$200	x	\$300	\$150	\$265	\$200	\$380	\$235	\$415	\$255	\$215
Special state aid.....	\$125	\$125	\$85	\$125	0	\$85	0	x	\$125	\$125	\$85	\$125	\$65	0	\$65	\$125	\$125
State apportionment.....	\$240	\$187	\$207	\$189	\$102	\$161	\$98	x	\$229	\$207	\$255	\$237	\$162	\$239	\$167	\$79	\$106
Total funds available.....	\$965	\$860	\$647	\$564	\$352	\$596	\$298	x	\$654	\$482	\$605	\$562	\$607	\$474	\$647	\$459	\$539

\*Forty-five dollars for first four months and fifty dollars for second four months.

\*\*Several years.

\*\*\*Information not obtained.

\*\*\*\*Teacher paid two dollars per month to have work done.

xNo school in 1912-1913. Figures given are for previous year.

#### SUMMARY OF PRECEDING TABLE

Average enrollment .....	20.2
Months of school:	
Number having 5 months.....	2
Number having 6 months.....	2
Number having 7 months.....	2
Number having 8 months.....	11
Grade of teacher:	
Number of first grade.....	10
Number of second grade.....	6
Number of third grade.....	1
Previous teaching experience of teacher:	
Less than 12 months.....	7
From 12 to 24 months.....	7
Over 24 months.....	3
Average salary per month.....	\$49.26
Teachers doing janitor work.....	13
Teachers not doing janitor work.....	4*

\* One teacher hires a boy.

SUMMARY OF PRECEDING TABLE—*Continued*

Nationality of teacher:	
Norwegian .....	15
German .....	2
Age of teacher:	
Under 20 years.....	4
From 20 to 25 years.....	11
Over 25 years.....	2
Total revenue available for schools:	
Schools with less than \$500.....	5
Schools with from \$500 to \$600.....	4
Schools with from \$600 to \$700.....	5
Schools with over \$700.....	2

The average ages of pupils in the various grades of these seventeen schools, together with four other schools in the immediate neighborhood, appear in the following table. These are rough averages based on a very small number of cases for the higher grades.

Grade	Average Age
First .....	7.3
Second .....	8.1
Third .....	9.5
Fourth .....	10.9
Fifth .....	12.1
Sixth .....	13.1
Seventh .....	13.9
Eighth .....	14.8

Very few children are graduated from the eighth grade. In the whole county of about one hundred school districts there were but fifteen who completed the eighth grade in 1912, sixteen in 1911, and sixteen in 1910, or a total of forty-seven in three years. The following statement shows what these forty-seven eighth-grade graduates were doing during the year 1912-1913:

Attending high school.....	18
Attending normal school.....	9
At home on farm.....	5
Attending college.....	2
Attending business school.....	1
Unknown .....	12

This summary indicates that a very large proportion of the children who complete the grades enter high and normal schools.

Although the facts and figures given above indicate a very unsatisfactory condition among the rural schools, it should be mentioned that improvements are being effected as rapidly as possible. It was not until 1909 that the schools were graded at all, or that regular promotions or examinations were required. This partly accounts for the small number of eighth-grade graduates. For the year 1913-1914 there were thirty-five graduates in the county. The Illinois State Course of Study is followed, and March and May examinations are regularly offered in twenty-four rural schools in the county.

Improvements are also being made in the schoolhouses and their equipment. During the school year of 1913-1914, three schools have been furnished with hot-lunch equipment and a like number with play or recreation apparatus. One has had manual training equipment added, while others have been furnished with new ventilating systems, and new metal walls and ceilings. Attention has also been given to better decoration of the walls of the schools, and to better up-keep of the buildings.

#### DRAINAGE

The problem of drainage on this flat, low-lying country is a serious one, especially because of the tendency of the streams to overflow their banks during particularly heavy rainfalls. Only two of the 201 farms visited had tile drainage. What drainage there is, is done by means of open ditches.

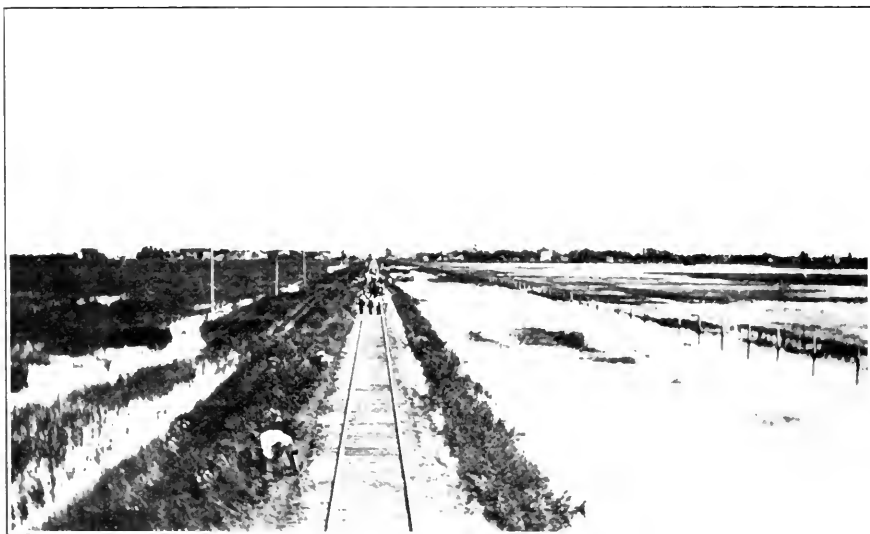
Apparently the first serious loss from floods after the settlement of this district occurred in 1885. The local paper reported that probably one third of the crop was destroyed that year. In 1886 a convention was called in Crookston to consider the drainage question, and it was decided to have a survey made of the five valley counties for the purpose of determining the possibilities and expense of providing an efficient drainage system. Half of the money for this survey was given by Mr. J. J. Hill; the other half was raised by assessing the five counties on the basis of acreage.

The agitation for drainage at this time died out, however, without anything being done. This has been the general rule; interest in the drainage problem has been aroused in flood years, only to subside during the dry years. It was not until 1893 that the people began to take hold of the problem seriously, and meetings were held in this locality to consider means of preventing the overflow of the Wild Rice River. In that same year the State Drainage Commission let contracts for two state ditches in this county, one of these passing through the territory covered by this survey. Nothing was done by the county itself at that time, and the matter lay dormant until bad floods in 1897 again awakened interest. It was not until about 1900 that the county began to construct ditches, and since that time

mar 13  
mar 14

there have been built within the county twenty-seven ditches at a total cost of \$168,000. In addition there have been constructed two "judicial" ditches along the county line for which Norman County contributed half the cost, or \$25,000.

It is apparent that these ditches can not take care of bad floods. Wet years occurred in 1905, 1906, and 1907, and a very severe flood in 1909, due to heavy rainfalls farther up the valley of the Wild Rice River. It is claimed that what the farmers lost through this flood they more than made up the two or three years following, owing to the increased productivity of their land that had been flooded. Since 1909 there has been evolved an elaborate scheme for deepening and straightening the Wild Rice River in order to prevent the overflow of its banks, but the assessments on the



The Country is so Flat that Occasionally it Becomes Flooded

property owners who would be benefited must be so heavy that during the summer of 1913 there seemed little likelihood of its going through. There has been no trouble from floods since 1909, and that partly accounts for the lack of interest at present. Furthermore, complaints are common that the farmers along the river, who would be assessed according to acreage, have reported an unduly small number of acres on the farms that would be benefited by such a project.

#### ROADS AND BRIDGES

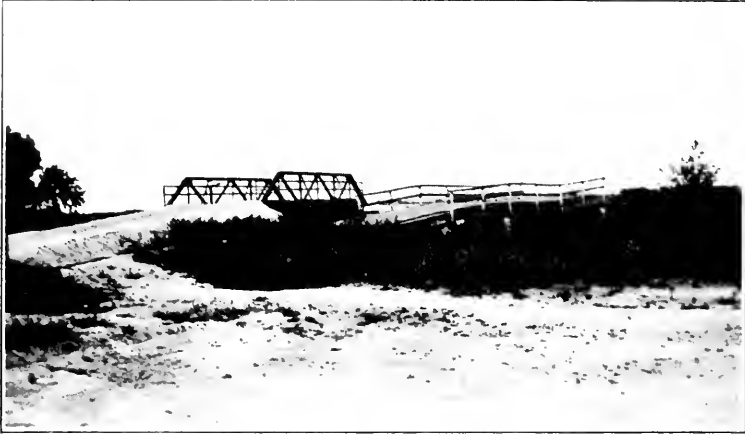
Roads follow section lines and are consequently straight and run either north and south or east and west. Owing to the flatness of the country, there are no grades. The heavy gumbo soil makes good hard

roads in dry weather, and heavy muddy roads in wet weather. The mud does not become very deep during ordinary rains, however, and the roads dry off fairly rapidly when the weather clears. This rapid drying leaves them very rough, and they require several days of traffic to make them smooth and even. In the eastern part of the territory surveyed, where the soil is sandy, the roads are better in rainy weather, and become soft and dusty during dry weather. Practically all roads are graded, but, since gravel is not found in this section, the expense of bringing it in by rail has not been undertaken except in one or two instances. Even the roads in the village are not graveled, and they become very unsightly when wet. There are not more than two miles of gravel road in the whole territory covered.

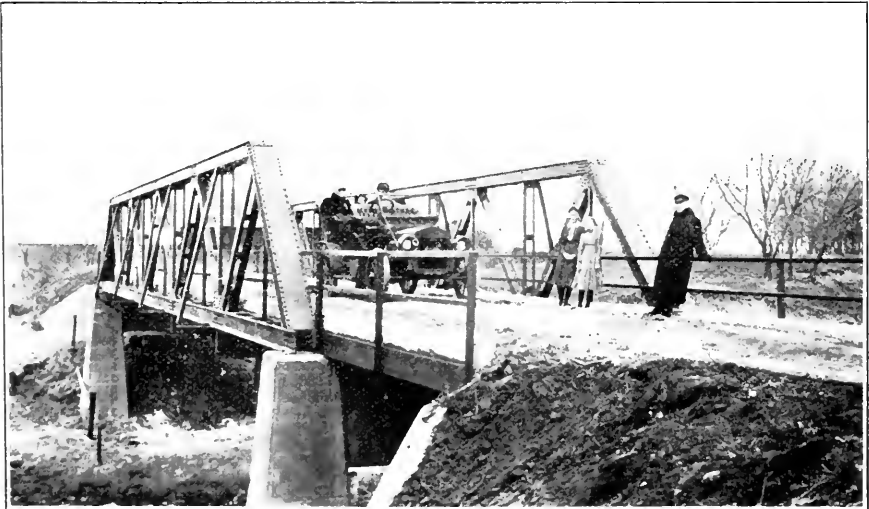


An Efficient Method of Road Grading

The time-honored custom of working out the road tax is in vogue, except in one township where the farmers of their own accord in about 1907 substituted a money tax with satisfaction to all concerned. In the other townships there are the usual complaints that farmers do not work faithfully on the roads and that the work is done in patches without any system. And yet the farmers prefer to work their taxes, although most of them realize that roads would be better kept under a system of money taxes, centralized supervision, and contract work. The attitude of a majority of the farmers is decidedly against the new Minnesota legislation providing for such a system. Their principal objections are that they prefer to pay taxes in work rather than in money, and that the money will be spent only on trunk roads, an improvement benefiting principally the auto-



The New Steel and Concrete Bridge Supplants the Old Wooden One



New Type of Bridge Being Built in This Community



mobilitist. Many farmers were found, however, who favored the new law.

Horse power has always been used in grading until during the summer of 1913, when the central township of the district purchased a large and efficient grader operated by a tractor, as shown in the illustration. Ordinarily, when farmers grade a road, they leave it in so bad a condition that some time must elapse before it becomes smooth enough for comfortable travel.

A Good Roads Club, formed by the business men of the village, has been trying to arouse interest in road improvement, and has furnished split-log drags for the farmers to use on the roads. Inasmuch as these business men own automobiles they have not been able to arouse much enthusiasm on the part of the farmers. It was through the efforts of this club that a mile of road just outside of the village has been surfaced with gravel. It was hoped that this would serve as an object lesson and increase interest in road improvement.

Conspicuous progress is being made in the building of modern concrete and steel bridges to supplant the old wooden bridges which are fast wearing out. The accompanying illustration shows one of these new bridges together with the old wooden bridge which is to be supplanted by it.

#### CREDIT AND BANKING

Since 1890 there have been two banks in the village, one state and the other national. The owners of the national bank control a chain of ten or twelve banks in Minnesota and North Dakota. The total deposits of these two banks in 1913 amounted to \$735,000, all but about \$50,000 of which belonged to people within the county. The National Bank estimated that its deposits came from the following sources:

	Amount	Per Cent of Total
Farmers .....	\$282,000	65
Residents of village.....	108,000	25
People outside of community.....	43,000	10
Total .....	\$433,000	100

The total deposits belonging to farmers in the two banks are in the neighborhood of \$475,000, but this amount represents the deposits of more than the 201 farmers covered by the investigation.

The banks pay 5 per cent interest on twelve-month deposits, 4 per cent on six-month deposits, and no interest at all on demand deposits. Of the \$735,000 deposits in the two banks, \$171,000, or 23.3 per cent, are demand deposits receiving no interest. The farmers use checks instead of cash in their ordinary business transactions to a much greater extent than

they did even five years ago. The National Bank found as the result of a careful estimate that the number of checking accounts of farmers had increased from about 100 in 1907 to 316 in 1913.

The following table shows loans and discounts and the deposits in the State Bank on August first of each year since 1900:

Year	Loans and Discounts	Deposits
1900.....	\$136,343	\$135,564
1901.....	170,788	170,882
1902.....	205,836	215,865
1903.....	215,799	206,939
1904.....	226,944	230,799
1905.....	186,191	173,512
1906.....	183,049	181,561
1907.....	197,622	204,168
1908.....	198,859	206,523
1909.....	221,082	246,501
1910.....	235,005	264,560
1911.....	238,486	263,015
1912.....	285,210	291,880
1913.....	283,923	302,526

The banks have greater funds than they can loan locally (at least at the prevailing rates), and hence have to buy commercial paper. About 30 per cent of the funds of the two banks is loaned in this way. The State Bank estimates that about \$120,000, or 41 per cent of its total loans, are to farmers, and half as much to residents of the village. The rate of interest received on commercial paper during 1913 was about 6 per cent—a little higher than ordinary. Long-time loans are made direct on real estate security by the State Bank. The National Bank lends large amounts of money on real estate as the agent of eastern investors. The eastern investor receives 5 or 5½ per cent and the local bank 1 per cent per year as a commission.

The rate of long-time loans is 6 or 6½ per cent. Such loans run ordinarily for five years, but they are commonly renewed. Some are made for ten years. In most of the real estate loans no provision is made for installment payments before the loan falls due; in some cases provision is made that the borrower may repay \$100 or a multiple thereof at any interest date. Complete data were not secured as to the number of farms mortgaged, but the 1910 census showed that 57 per cent of farms in the whole county were mortgaged, and this proportion undoubtedly indicates rather closely the condition in the part of the county investigated. The great majority of real estate loans are borrowed for the purpose of paying for land,

both by new settlers and by old settlers who are acquiring additional acreage.

The rate on short-time loans is either 8 or 10 per cent, the amount depending on the financial standing of the borrower, on the desirability of procuring the banking business of the borrower, and on the extent to which there is competition between the two banks in placing the loan. The rate charged to well-established and reliable farmers is usually 8 per cent. New settlers whose financial reputation is not established are commonly charged 10 per cent. Short-time loans are generally made on single-name paper. Chattel security is required only of some renters and new settlers. The rate on such loans is usually 10 per cent. Very few questions are asked concerning the use to which borrowed money is to be put.

new.

CHAPTER II

HOW THE FARMING COMMUNITY LIVES

The predominant features of this community which influence the standard of living and the degree of social intercourse are the large size of farms and hence the wide distance separating neighbors, the dependence on grain crops, the shifting of the population, and the mixture of nationalities and religions. On the whole the farmhouses of this particular community are not as attractive or as well equipped with comforts as are those in the more prosperous communities to the west along the Red River. Many of the houses are very small—oftentimes not in keeping with the barns—although many of the latter are also small and not well cared for.

FARM LABOR

The labor on the farm is heavy, especially during the summer and fall, and requires long days of work. The average number of hours per day spent in various ways is shown in the following statement for summer and winter separately:

	AVERAGE NUMBER OF HOURS PER DAY	
	Summer	Winter
Chores.....	2.5	4.3
In fields (or outside work, in winter).....	9.9	4.1
Eating.....	1.5	1.7
Sleeping.....	7.7	9.0
Recreation.....	2.4	4.9

During the summer the average number of hours spent on chores and in the fields is 12.4 per day. After allowing 1.5 hours for eating and 7.7 hours for sleep, this leaves but 2.4 hours for recreation per day. These proportions

Summer

chores	in fields	eat- ing	sleeping	recrea- tion
2.5	9.9	1.5	7.7	2.4

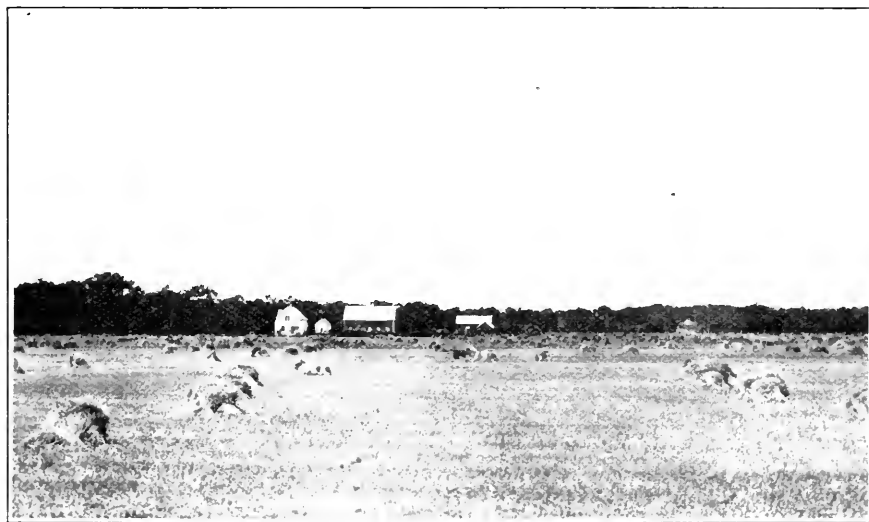
Winter

chores	in fields	eat- ing	sleeping	recreation
4.3	4.1	1.7	9.0	4.9

Average Number of Hours per Day Spent in Various Ways, Summer and Winter

of course vary during the summer months, the work being particularly heavy in the spring and late summer, with more or less of a let-up during June and July, since only a few farmers have cultivated crops which need attention.

The hired-help problem is a serious one; 55 per cent of the farmers visited reported that it was hard to find help. There are a few farmers, mainly those well along in years, who have reduced the number of dairy cows during recent years, because they could not do all the work themselves, and were unable to hire efficient help. The wages of farm labor have increased from about \$20 per month a few years ago to from \$30 to \$35 at present, and farmers complain that those who hire out at these wages dislike the drudgery and long hours made necessary by milking and chores. They say that the attitude of farm laborers has changed appreciably in this respect. One farmer, who reflected the opinion of many others, said that the shortage of farm labor is due to the fact that "there are too many men who want to wear white shirts, and who won't put on overalls."



One of the Better Farm Homes along the River

Much labor is hired by the day during haying and harvesting seasons. The wages during the former period are only about \$1.50 per day, while during harvesting they run up to \$2.50.

The aggregate amount paid out by 103 farmers for hired help during 1912 was \$18,908, or \$183.57 per farmer. Thirty-seven per cent of all farmers had hired day help an average of 43 days per farm during the year; 23 per cent of the farmers had had month help an average of seven months



Typical Farm Homes

per farm. Only two farms had hired help by the year. The fluctuating character of the work complicates the help problem. Many farmers want hired help for only eight months, and most of them for a shorter time. Coöperation among the farmers during harvesting, already alluded to, is an important factor in minimizing the requirement for outside help at that season.

The farmers' wives do their share of the work. In 26 per cent of the families the women work in the fields during rush seasons; in two thirds of the families they help milk and do the chores. In 87.5 per cent of all the families they make their own butter. About 25 per cent had hired girls for at least part of the year, but the average length of time for all families reporting was only 89 days during the year. In many cases girls were hired for a very few weeks during times of illness or confinement. There were only eight families out of the total of 201 that had kept hired girls for over six months. The wages of hired girls vary from \$3.50 to \$5.00 per week. The lower wage is for young girls. The average paid was \$4.20 per week. On 82 per cent of the farms women work in the garden, and in 39 per cent they receive no help from the men, although in many in-

Percentage of Farms where Housewife

Makes Own Butter 87.5%

Works in Garden 82. %

Helps with Milking  
and Chores 67 %

Helps in Fields 25 %

stances they are assisted by young children. There were but eight farms found where men alone took care of the garden. Thirty-two per cent of the families reported that they hired dressmakers occasionally.

Not much progress has been made in adopting devices to facilitate housework. Fifty-seven of the farms visited have flowing wells, which are a great comfort, but which are too likely to be located more conveniently to the barn than to the house, thus necessitating a great deal of carrying on the part of the housewife. Only four farms were found where there was drinking water in the house. Seventy-one per cent had their drinking

water within eighty feet of the house. Sixty-one per cent used washing machines, and eight farms were found where the washing machine was operated by a gas engine or motor. Similar power was used to run cream separators on four farms, and to operate pumps on nine farms. Eight farms had windmills.

Four farms were found with steam or hot-water heating plants, and one with a hot-air furnace. Sixty-nine per cent had coal stoves; the rest use only wood. The farms located along the two streams have good supplies of timber. Twenty-seven per cent had oil stoves for use in summer. There are practically no summer kitchens, because the hot season is comparatively short. Three farmhouses were found that had bathrooms.

In the majority of cases little attention is paid to the appearance of the yard, although there were 21 families (10 per cent of the total) that kept the front yard clipped with lawn mowers. About 25 per cent let the farm animals keep the grass clipped around the house. Seven farmhouses had screened porches; 20 (10 per cent of the total) had hammocks or frame swings. Only 2.5 per cent kept ice. Milk and cream are usually placed in running water and the flowing wells are a great convenience in this way. Just two thirds of the farms had telephones, and 88 per cent had rural free delivery, although many of this 88 per cent had to go some distance to their mail boxes.

#### WHAT BECOMES OF THE YOUNG PEOPLE

The farm families run fairly large. Out of the 201 visited there was one with 14 children; one with 12; 5 with 11; 7 with 10; 10 with 9; 14 with 8; 13 with 7; 16 with 6; and 15 with 5. The average was 5 per family for the 159 families reporting children. There were 44 families with a total of 57 unmarried daughters over 18 living at home; 20 families reported 33 unmarried daughters away from home. In all, the farmers visited had 96 married daughters, of whom 60 had been married at home and 36 had been married after leaving home. Of the 33 unmarried daughters away from home, 20 were working in cities. Their occupations were as follows:

Housework .....	8
Stenographers .....	5
Nurses .....	4
Telephone operator .....	1
Waitress in restaurant.....	1
Factory hand .....	1

Seven daughters were reported as working in the homes of other families in the country. Eleven daughters were teaching school; 13 were attending high school; none were attending college or normal school.



The families visited reported 175 sons over 18 years of age. These 175 sons were distributed as follows:

	Number	Per Cent of Total
Living at home.....	96	54.9
Farming .....	31	17.7
In home community.....	15	
Away from home.....	16	
Working in country.....	22	12.6
Working in cities and towns.....	26	14.8
Total .....	175	100.0

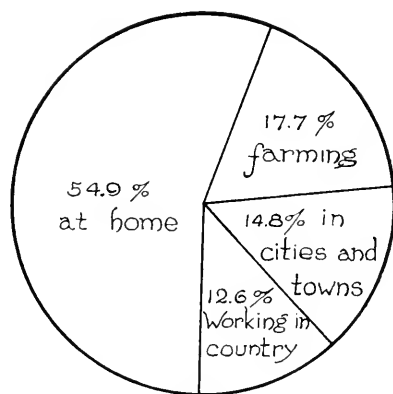


Diagram Showing Distribution of Farmers' Sons over Eighteen Years of Age

Of 40 married sons, 19 had been married in the home community and 21 after leaving home. The occupations of the 26 sons working in cities and towns, with the number working in each were as follows: merchants, 4; saw mill, 3; stenographers and accountants, 2; bank clerks, 2; carpenters, 2; electricians, 2; railroad laborers, 2; unknown, 2; and one each of the following: butcher, butter-maker, hotel-keeper, ice business, janitor, mail carrier, and minister. There were only 6 boys in all the families visited that were attending high school, 4 who were at college, and one who was in normal school.

On 19 farms there were found boys over 16 who did not care to be farmers, and in 9 families there were girls who did not care for farm life. The great majority of the young people who were still on the farms, however, had no desire to leave the farm. This was also true of the parents, although 17 families were found where the husband believed that he preferred city or town life, and 19 families where the wife preferred city life. Probably as large a proportion of city people could be found who would

claim that they prefer farm life. It was encouraging to hear the great majority of the farmers praise farm life and disclaim any desire ever to move to town.

#### SOCIAL RELATIONS AND RECREATIONS

Social intercourse among farmers on the whole has decreased rather than increased during the past few years, although there are certain sections in which this is not true. It is said that the farmers used to get together "like one big family" in the early days, and that distances between farms did not seem so great. The reasons assigned by one farmer for the decrease in social relations were as follows: The farmers are less dependent on each other than formerly; new people have moved in between the old settlers; since the gradual development of mixed farming, farmers have less time to visit their neighbors; the constant coming and going of renters and the mixture of nationalities and religions, to say nothing of the great distances in a region of such large farms, and the severe cold of the winter, are other deterrent influences. An intelligent farmer who had recently moved in from Missouri complained of the lack of sociability among the farmers of this section, and he drew an interesting contrast between the stern countenances and serious attitudes of these farmers and the joviality and light-heartedness of the people in his section of the country. He said that the greatest need was more sociability. Many other new settlers had similar feelings.

And yet there are certain parts of the region covered in the survey in which there is a good deal of social life. There is a German community northeast of Ada which has frequent card parties and a few dances, as well as other parties and "get-togethers." There is also southeast of town a small neighborhood of mixed nationalities, though containing several Americans, who congregate at each other's houses during the winter evenings to a great extent; and there is another section southwest of town where the farmers have more or less social life. It is only in this latter section that barn dances are held to any extent.

Forty-six per cent of the families reported that they played cards for evening recreation and 25 per cent that they were absolutely opposed to card-playing. Members of 41 per cent of the families attend dances, at least occasionally. There are a few informal dances held in the farm houses. Only 12 per cent of the families had daughters who attended barn dances, and they attended on an average of only about five times a year. Eight per cent of the families have daughters who ever attend town dances, and most of these attend only one or two a year. Twelve per cent of the families had boys who went to town dances occasionally. Twenty-seven per cent of the farmers were absolutely opposed to dancing. This opposition was principally among the Norwegian Lutherans. The German Luth-

eran preacher in the German settlement northeast of town is opposed to dancing, but has no scruples against card-playing or beer-drinking. The people of his community indulge in all three forms of amusement.

The churches are the most important influences in bringing the farm people of his community indulge in all three forms of amusement. but they do not encourage the mingling of people of different nationalities. Services are held only once or twice a month in most of the churches. In 59 per cent of the families the wife is a church member, and in 54 per



A Typical Church

cent the husband is. Eighty-four per cent of the wives who are church members and 83 per cent of the husbands reported regular attendance at church. There were 174 families out of the 201 visited that reported attendance at church, and the average number of services attended per family was one and a half per month. The average distance to the church attended was 3.3 miles. It is perhaps through the ladies' aid societies that the churches have their most important social influence. The housewives in 40

per cent of the families are members of such societies, and they each attend on the average about eleven meetings a year. Twenty-three per cent of the families had children in Sunday schools, and 19 per cent in young peoples' societies.

An attempt was made to obtain a statistical measure of the amount of informal visiting among farmers. Seventy-five per cent of the families reported that they visited to a certain extent during the winter evenings, and it appeared that they averaged perhaps three or four such visits a month during the winter. Eighty-five per cent of the families reported that they visited other farmers on Sundays and they averaged better than once a month. About one fourth of those who visit apparently confine their visits principally to relatives.

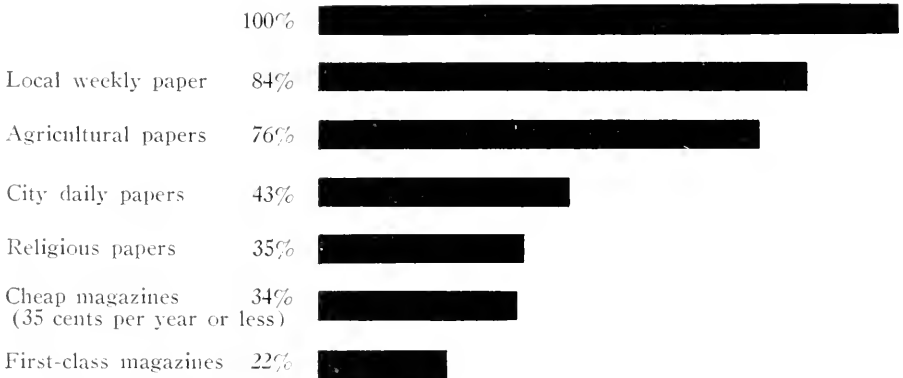


Diagram Showing Percentage of Families Reached by Various Kinds of Reading Material

Ninety-two per cent of the families report that they do more or less reading. In other words, there were found 16 families out of 201 that said they read practically none at all. The following table gives an idea of the kinds of papers and magazines taken regularly by farmers:

	Per Cent of Families	Average Number per Family
Local weekly paper.....	84	1
Agricultural papers .....	76	2
City daily papers.....	43	1
Religious papers .....	35	1.5
Cheap magazines (35 cents per year or less)...	34	1.8
First-class magazines.....	22	1.9

In addition to the above, about half the families took weekly papers from other communities, either where they had previously lived, or where sons

and daughters and other relatives were located. Thirty-five per cent of the farmers said that they received and read agricultural bulletins issued either by the Federal Government or by the State. In a few cases only the children read the farm papers and station bulletins.

Fifty-two per cent of the farms had some kind of music in the house. The musical instruments most commonly found were as follows:

	Percentage of Homes
Organ .....	33
Violin .....	26
Phonograph .....	24
Piano .....	6

The country people do not mingle socially with the village people to any extent. Farmers feel that the village people are "snobbish"; many expressed this thought by saying, "We are not good enough for them." Farmers attend very few entertainments in the village. Members of 48 per cent of the families had attended moving picture shows during the previous year, but such attendance had been very infrequent except in the case of a few families living near town. In 14 per cent of the families parents had attended one or more shows or theatrical performances, and in 20 per cent the young people of the family had attended such performances. Nineteen per cent had been represented at band concerts, and 9 per cent at other musical concerts. The number of shows and concerts in the village is extremely limited, however, and the Lyceum Course offers about the only desirable attraction. A farmers' short course, held in the village, had been attended by 55 per cent of the farmers.

The farm people seldom leave the community to visit cities or other localities; there are no large cities near enough to make such trips possible or worth while. Occasionally they go to Fargo or Crookston. Only sixteen farmers were found who had ever attended the State Fair at the Twin Cities, and in seventeen cases young people of the family had attended the Fair. The State Fair has always come too early in September for the farmers of northern Minnesota. The local county fair is always held in the village about the first of October, and the farmers attend this in large numbers.

The average distance to town from the farms visited is 5.1 miles. Eight miles is about the greatest distance that farmers have to travel to market in this region. The average number of trips to town was 6.3 per month per family. This of course varies with nearness to town and with different seasons of the year. The regular trips of those who haul cream to the creamery raise the average. The proportions of all farmers having different kinds of vehicles appear in the following table:

	Per Cent of All Farmers
Wide-tired wagon.....	84
Single buggy.....	77
Double-seated buggy.....	34
Surrey .....	21
Automobile .....	6

There were twelve farmers found, or 6 per cent of the total, who owned automobiles. Most of the farmers used work horses for driving, although 16 per cent kept special driving teams.

#### FARMERS' ECONOMIC ORGANIZATIONS

The organizations that the farmers of this section are interested in are the creameries, an insurance company, telephone companies, farmers' elevator, and Farmers' Club. The extent to which the 201 farmers visited belong to these organizations appears in the following statement:

	Per Cent	
Creameries .....	27	
Insurance .....	32	
Telephone .....	19	
Elevator .....	10	
Farmers' Club.....	23	..

The principal creamery is at Ada. (See chapter on Marketing of Farm Products.) There is also a creamery northeast of the town on the very edge of the section covered by the survey; and also one five miles southeast of Ada which is no longer operating. The Ada creamery is a small one, and it will appear in the chapter on Marketing that a surprisingly small proportion of the cream produced is hauled there. There is a highly successful mutual insurance company which covers this territory, and there are three coöperative telephone lines. The "Farmers' Elevator" does not really belong to the farmers, although there are still a few who hold stock in it. (See chapter on Marketing.) Coöperation has not progressed very far, although there were only six farmers who said they had no faith in coöperation.

With regard to insurance, practically half of the farms are insured against fire, with an average of \$2,137 per farm. Only 15 per cent of the farmers carry life insurance, with an average of \$3,708 apiece.<sup>1</sup> There is opposition to life insurance especially on the part of the Norwegian Lutherans. It was said that a country pastor had recently refused to officiate

<sup>1</sup> Of the few who carry life insurance, there were only two who had over \$3,000. One of these had \$9,000, a fact which accounts for the high average.

at the funeral of one of his parishioners because it was found that he had insurance in a fraternal order, and that a preacher from another denomination had to be called from the village. It was undoubtedly the membership in a fraternal order that this pastor objected to principally, because the opposition to insurance *per se*, although still noticeable, is gradually dying out. Twenty-eight families, or 14 per cent of all visited, had members who belonged to lodges, but there were only nine men and three women who actually attended lodge meetings in the village. Most of the others were members merely for the sake of carrying insurance.

Shortly before the survey was made, a Farmers' Club had been formed through the efforts of the instructor in agriculture in the high school. Twenty-three per cent of the farmers visited were members of this club, and the outlook appeared bright for a successful and permanent organization. Meetings were held in the village, and a well-attended picnic was held during the summer. At this picnic the farmers' families came shortly before noon, had their lunch immediately, listened to a few speeches and some music by the "juvenile" band from the village, and then dispersed. Although thoroughly successful, the picnic would probably have been of more value had the farmers had the disposition and taken the time to play games and do more general visiting.

## CHAPTER III

### MARKETING OF FARM PRODUCTS

The following table shows the approximate values of the principal farm products marketed at or through Ada in 1912:

	Amount	Average Price	Total Value
Wheat:			
Elevators .....	77,000 bu.	} \$0.78	\$99,000
Flour mill .....	50,000 bu.		
Flax .....	20,000 bu.	1.23	24,600
Rye .....	26,500 bu.	.47	12,450
Barley .....	90,000 bu.	.35	31,500
Oats .....	125,000 bu.	.25	31,250
Live stock .....	.....	.....	64,400
Cream:			
Sold to creamery .....	177,000 lbs.	.....	12,820
Shipped .....	13,900 lbs.	.....	1,000
Butter ( farm-made ) .....	25,000 lbs.	.....	5,000
Poultry .....	.....	.....	6,000
Eggs .....	.....	.184	12,000
Potatoes .....	.....	.....	4,000
Flax straw .....	.....	.....	2,625
Miscellaneous ( hides, wool, vegetables, bacon, etc. ) .....	.....	.....	5,000
			\$311,645

The total value of farm products marketed at Ada was a little over \$300,000 in 1912, most of which was shipped to outside markets. This list does not include products consumed on the farm. Fairly exact figures were obtained for some products in the table above; for others estimates are given.

#### THE MARKETING OF GRAIN

Grains constitute over two thirds of the marketed crops; in earlier days the proportion was of course larger. The problems connected with grain-marketing may hence be deemed the most important.

As railroads were built through the wheat-growing sections, warehouse or elevator facilities were generally provided with but little delay. At least as early as 1877 there was a warehouse at Ada for grain and seeds. By 1880 large quantities of grain were being marketed at this point. In 1883



the local paper said that "Ada is already the leading primary wheat market in northern Minnesota, receiving last year from trains over 400,000 bushels of wheat." This, if correct, was more than three times as much wheat as was marketed in 1912.

At first, the St. Paul and Pacific Railroad, passing through Ada, tapped a wide territory. Farmers brought their grain from points even twenty and thirty miles away—from what is now Mahnomon County on the east, and from points in Dakota beyond the Red River on the west, at least during the winter when the river was closed for navigation. Early settlers can remember the long processions of farmers' wagons, drawn largely by oxen and stretching far out over the prairies, bringing wheat to the Ada elevators, where they would often have to wait in long lines, even over night sometimes, in order to unload.

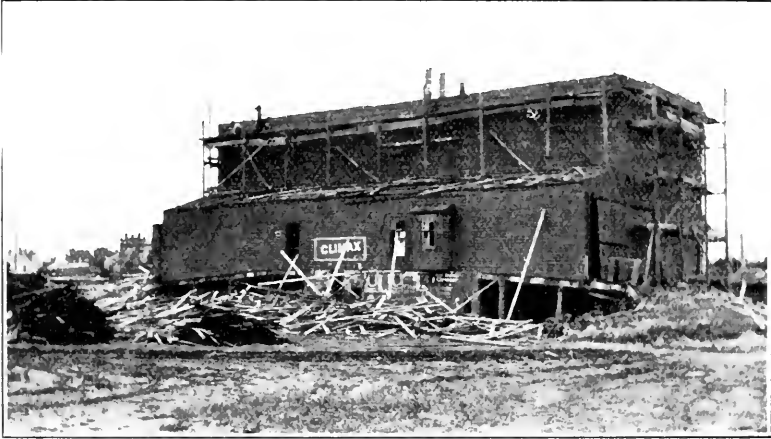


The Grain Elevators of the Village

In spite of the opening of the railroad along the Red River fourteen miles west of Ada in 1883, thus lopping off a large part of the tributary territory, the shipments of wheat continued unabated, and were estimated at nearly 500,000 bushels in that year. Within the next two or three years a number of circumstances conspired to detract from the importance of Ada as a shipping point. The first severe flood was experienced in 1885, destroying a large part of the crop. In 1886 the present Northern Pacific line running north toward Winnipeg was built fourteen miles east of Ada, thus cutting off another large slice of its territory. Finally, the price of wheat, which had been very high, began to decline about 1886, and the production of wheat per acre also began to fall off. An item in the local paper stated in November, 1888, that the Northwestern Elevator had been closed for the season.

For many years there have been five elevators at Ada, many more than have been needed to handle the grain brought to that point. During the summer of 1913, while this survey was in progress, one of the five was torn down, and the materials were shipped to Montana to be used in the erection of an elevator in that State for the storage and handling of grain. Although the other four are all being operated, the bulk of the business each year usually goes to two or possibly three of them. The operation of more than two apparently results in an economic waste.

In 1889 a meeting of farmers was held in the courthouse in order to organize the Norman County Elevator and Storage Company, for the building and operating of two elevators, one at Ada, and the other at Twin Valley on the Northern Pacific, fourteen miles to the east. The capital was \$10,000, with shares of \$5 each, and no person was to hold more than five



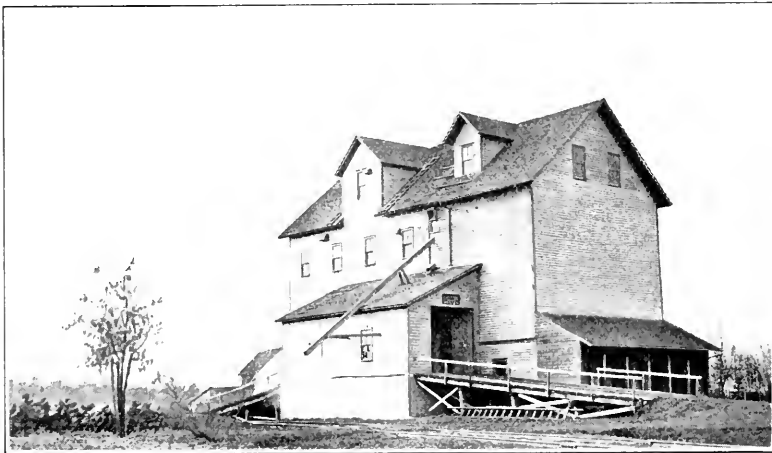
This Elevator Is Being Demolished; the Lumber Goes to Montana to be Reerected as a Grain Elevator

shares. It was further stipulated that the shares should not be held or controlled by combinations of persons or companies. This was the first coöperative effort of importance among the farmers around Ada.

The Farmers' Elevator was built and put in operation in 1890. The company made a slight profit the first year, but jealousies and dissatisfaction appeared among the farmers. The second year of operation was characterized by poor management and meddling on the part of farmer members. It is said that the manager bought damaged wheat as No. 1 Northern, and that this wheat graded only No. 3 in Minneapolis. As a result, the elevator was run at a loss. It was then rented; there had been two assessments, the farmers were disgusted with the whole affair, and got rid of their stock. One farmer member is said to have sold his share for a

keg of beer. The stock gradually got into the hands of business men in the town; one able man in particular became interested in it and has supervised its operations successfully since about 1895. Through able and conservative management it has been kept in operation, and to-day gets more of the farmers' grain than any other. In fact, an addition has recently been built. Although still called the Farmers' Elevator, it does not belong to the farmers, and it is run as a joint-stock company. This experience is typical of many so-called farmers' elevators in Minnesota. And yet the business men can not be blamed for stepping in when the farmers have failed to make a success of it. The farmers are now considering the purchase of an elevator to be run coöperatively. They are better fitted to manage such a concern now than they were twenty years ago.

*note*



The Flour Mill Furnishes an Important Market for Wheat

The local roller mill is an important factor in the marketing of wheat. Of the 1912 crop it took more than one third of that marketed at Ada. In some years the mill takes a larger proportion. During the short-crop year of 1910, there were only two of the five elevators running, and the mill, besides buying direct from farmers, took all the wheat of the Farmers' Elevator and a large part of that of the other elevator. Probably more than three quarters of the wheat brought to Ada that year was purchased by the flour mill.

The flour mill pays farmers two cents a bushel over the current market price. The reasons assigned by the secretary for this practice are: first, to get the best wheat; second, to induce farmers to go to the trouble of hauling to the mill where they often have to wait their turns; and, third, to get farmers to buy flour at the mill. The mill exchanges flour for wheat

in the proportion of a sack of flour (ninety-eight pounds) for three bushels of wheat. This is cheaper for farmers than buying flour at the stores. The mill officials think that the mill furnishes the farmers around Ada with five sixths of their flour. On account of this exchange privilege, and the premium offered, farmers outside of the natural trade territory of Ada bring their wheat to the mill, many coming a considerable distance.

The price of wheat in Ada is between ten and eleven cents below the Minneapolis price. The difference is made up approximately as follows:

	Per Bushel
Freight rate (11 cents per 100 lbs.)	\$0.066
Commission	.01
Weighing, switching, etc.	.005
Margin allowed to cover local expenses	.02
	<hr/> \$0.101

#### MARKETING OF LIVE STOCK

There are two markets for stock: first, the local market, represented by butchers in the town who slaughter for local consumption; and, second, individual cattle-buyers who purchase for shipment to outside markets. The relative importance of these two markets is illustrated by the following approximate figures for 1912:

Value of stock sold:

For local slaughter	\$14,440
For shipment	50,000
Total	<hr/> \$64,400

During most of the year 1912 there were two butcher shops in Ada. On August first, one shop bought out the other, but one of the members of the buying firm continued to run a second shop during the heavy business of the fall. Since December 1, 1912, there has been but one shop.

The following table shows the approximate number of head, and value of cattle, calves, sheep, and hogs bought by the local butchers during the year 1912.

	Number	Value	Average Value per Head
Cattle	225	\$7,650	\$34.00
Calves	65	470	7.23
Hogs	342	5,950	17.40
Sheep	64	351	5.48
Total	696	\$14,421	.....

The weights of animals purchased by the butchers for local slaughter were not ascertainable. The average values per head, however, indicate that the stock was pretty "scrawny." This is brought out more clearly below in the figures referring to shipments of stock to other markets. The purchases of animals from farmers do not represent the total amount of meat sold by the local butchers, however, because they also bought considerable quantities—principally beef—from the packing houses. The local consumption of meat products by months (aside from that killed on the farm) is of interest. The following table gives the amounts paid farmers by local butchers for live animals and the amounts paid packers for dressed meats.

	Paid to Farmers for Animals	Paid to Packers for Dressed Meats
January .....	\$713.00	\$ 65.45
February .....	474.00	115.72
March .....	1,045.00	198.43
April .....	1,113.00	213.88
May .....	1,328.00	314.54
June .....	1,098.00	400.00
July .....	1,093.00	350.00
August .....	1,542.00	400.00
September .....	1,752.00	600.00
October .....	2,146.00	600.00
November .....	1,326.00	400.00
December .....	791.00	156.87
Total .....	\$14,421.00	\$3,814.89

It will be seen from this table that the butcher shops handled the smallest amount of meat during the winter months. This was due partly to the fact that farmers can best keep their own fresh meat supply at that time of the year, and to the smaller number of transient laborers on farms and in the village industries.

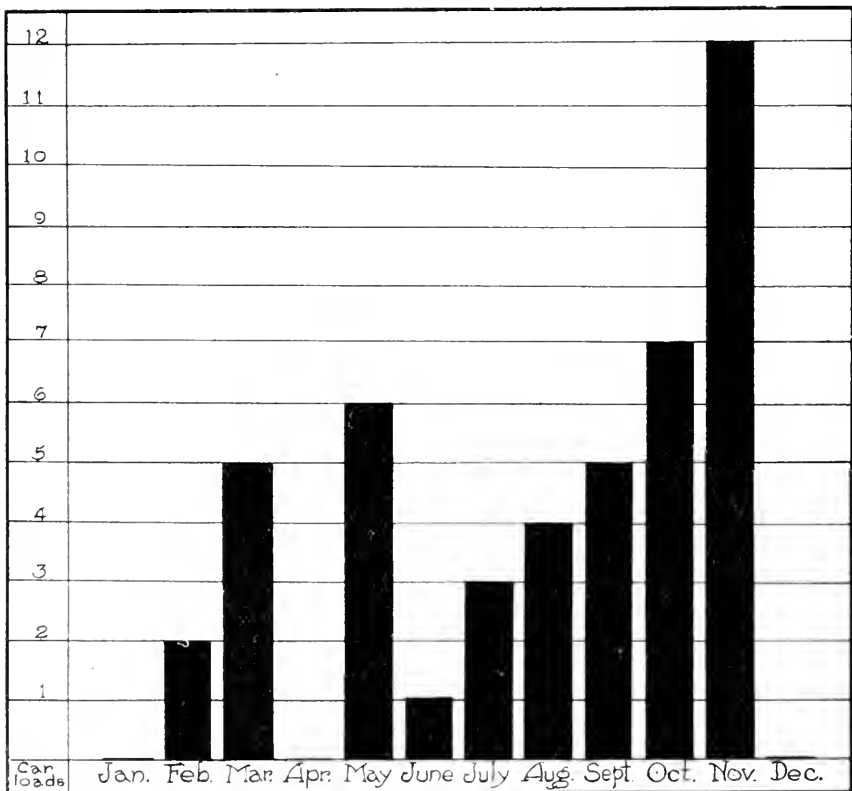
As for the shipments of live stock to outside points, there were 45 mixed carloads sent to market during the year 1912. Judging from detailed figures on a few of these carloads, the average value per car was about \$1,100, or a total of approximately \$50,000.

The carload shipments were distributed throughout the year as follows:

	Carloads
January .....	..
February .....	2
March .....	5
April .....	..

	Carloads
May .....	6
June .....	1
July .....	3
August .....	4
September .....	5
October .....	7
November .....	12
December .....	..
Total .....	45

During 1912 there were no less than five different buyers scouring the country to buy stock for shipment. They go about from farm to farm with horse and carriage (one was using an automobile in 1913) and make offers to the farmers for their stock. South St. Paul prices are used as a



Carload Shipments of Live Stock by Months, 1912

basis for local prices, but it is hard to say just what margins the local buyers allow under the market. The cost of getting live stock to market in South St. Paul averages 32.4 cents per hundred pounds, 20 cents of which represents freight and 5.7 cents commission. Add to this 32.4 cents enough to pay the buyer for the use of a horse and carriage and to give him a living, and it is likely that the farmers get between 50 cents and \$1 under the South St. Paul market. Some farmers know better than others what their stock is worth and consequently get better prices. Others are tempted by offers of round sums for a number of head together with little reference either to current market price or to weight of animals.

If the farmers had their own shipping association, it would cost them only the 32 cents that it now costs, plus 6 or 8 cents per hundred pounds for the manager. They would probably save an average of 40 or 50 cents per hundred pounds, or from \$4 to \$5 on a 1,000-pound steer. As a matter of fact the Farmers Club organized a stock-shipping association in the spring of 1913, but no attempt has yet been made to ship coöperatively.

The average weights of animals sent to South St. Paul in 9 of the 45 carloads shipped were as follows:

	Pounds
Cattle .....	717
Hogs .....	226
Calves .....	224
Sheep .....	107

#### MARKETING CREAM AND BUTTER

Owing to specialized grain-farming, dairying has never occupied an important place in farming in this community. Early in the eighties there were but few cattle. The slump in wheat prices along about 1886 gave a slight impetus to mixed farming and to dairying, and the number of cattle increased rapidly. County records show that the number of head of stock of all kinds in the county increased from 8,000 in 1882 to over 19,000 in 1887. The United States census figures for cattle alone in Norman County are as follows:

	Total Head of Cattle	Dairy Cows
1890.....	17,625	7,208
1900.....	21,708	8,972
1910.....	26,217	11,804

The number of dairy cows increased from 7,208 in 1890 to only 11,804 in 1910, indicating that the dairy industry has not been making very rapid progress during the past twenty years.

During the eighties all butter was made on the farm and the sur-

*mar 17*

plus over that consumed by the farmer's family was traded at the store. As this surplus exceeded local requirements, and as it was of very poor quality, the price of butter was extremely low, being worth in trade only 8 or 10 cents a pound. In 1887 one of the local papers began to agitate the building of a creamery. The advantages to farmers of obtaining cash for cream, and of saving the time and trouble of butter-making were set forth. It was said that nine tenths of the farmers did not know how to make decent butter and that merchants traded it in simply for fear of offending and losing country customers, and it was further affirmed that much that was traded in had to be sold to soap-makers for from  $1\frac{1}{2}$  to 3 cents per pound.

Finally in 1888 a creamery association was formed, principally among the business men in town. It was not a coöperative association. An outside promoter apparently had much to do in starting the movement. At any rate capital was subscribed and an excellent building constructed; in fact, it was a larger and more expensive building than that occupied by the coöperative creamery association which is operating successfully to-day. The company opened for business in June, 1888, and sent out wagons to collect cream over seven different routes.

This creamery was operated for two years at a loss. The local paper reports that it made 57,679 pounds of butter in 1889, which was 2,000 pounds more than was manufactured in the present coöperative creamery in 1912! But the plant was too large and expensive to be run economically; the collection of cream over a wide area was an expensive process; the whole scale of operations was on too grand a scale for the volume of business. It apparently had the effect of raising the local price of butter. One of the leading stores advertised in November, 1889, that it would pay 15 cents a pound for "fresh roll and print butter" and  $12\frac{1}{2}$  cents for "packed butter." The offering of high prices by local merchants was assigned as one reason for the company's failure. In 1890 the building was leased to a local merchant who attempted for a time to run it as a butter factory, and in 1894 it was bought by another merchant to use as a warehouse in connection with his business. It has been used for this purpose ever since.

In 1896 a group of farmers east of the village organized the Town Line Creamery Association on the coöperative plan and built a creamery about five miles from Ada on the boundary line between McDonaldsville and Lake Ida townships. This company ran during the summers (and for two years during the winter also) until 1911, when it was shut down. The reason assigned for closing was that there were not enough cows; that as old settlers had sold out, new farmers came in who had but little stock. The creamery that was built in Ada in 1903 undoubtedly cut into the territory of the Town Line Creamery to a slight extent. The Town Line Creamery was not very well located anyway. A short distance to the east and



southeast there is much unbroken prairie, thus cutting down the possible territory to draw from. Although the members of this association hope to start up again before long, the logical place for a creamery in this community appears to be in the village itself.

The present successful coöperative creamery was organized in 1903 by the farmers with the help of certain progressive business men in town. The latter perhaps thought that by bringing the farmers to town more regularly and by increasing their money income through a creamery, they would get more business at their stores. The paid-up capital stock amounts to \$2,900; shares are \$10 apiece; there are 55 shareholders; each member has but one vote. Five per cent dividends have been paid on capital stock in some years; other years none at all have been paid. The company first cleared itself of indebtedness in 1912.

The by-laws do not provide for a patronage dividend, but officers of the company say that it is their intention to distribute profits in this way if they ever should exceed a fair return on capital. No attempt is made, however, to earn such profits, because the highest possible price is paid to farmers for butter fat from month to month. There is no provision in the by-laws for a sinking fund, but a working balance for repairs and contingent expenses is maintained from year to year.

Farmers use hand separators and haul their cream to the creamery. Some of the principal creamery statistics for the year ended December 1, 1912 were as follows:

Pounds of cream received.....	177,038
Average test (per cent).....	26.1
Pounds of butter fat.....	46,257.78
Pounds of butter made.....	55,384.25
Per cent over-run.....	19.7
Average price paid for butter fat (cents)...	26.7
Total paid patrons for butter fat.....	\$12,820.52
Butter-maker's salary per month.....	\$65.00

On the whole the farmers seem well satisfied with their creamery, and yet a good deal of cream is shipped to centralizers. Those who ship claim that they get a better test for their cream in this way. During 1912 there were 1,658 gallons sent away by express, valued at about \$1,000, or one twelfth as much as was taken to the creamery. About fourteen different farmers shipped at one time or another during the year, most of their cream going to St. Paul and Minneapolis, and some to Alexandria, Minnesota. During 1913, after the passage of the law prohibiting the shipment of cream more than sixty-five miles unless pasteurized or in refrigerator cars, this cream began to go to Fargo and Crookston.

The shipments of cream from Ada by months during 1912 were as follows:

	Gallons
January .....	136
February .....	84
March .....	32
April .....	68
May .....	140
June .....	252
July .....	318
August .....	126
September .....	104
October .....	158
November .....	156
December .....	84
Total .....	1,658

Perhaps the most interesting feature of butter-marketing in this community is the persistence of the primitive practice of making butter on the farm, and of taking it to the store to trade for supplies. There are some farmers who do not keep enough cows to make it worth while to haul cream to town, and they naturally make their own butter. But 88 per cent of all farmers visited make their own butter, and included in this number are the majority of the creamery patrons. The creamery reported only \$207.21 worth of "butter and supplies" sold to patrons in 1912. And these patrons not only make butter for themselves but some of them often make a surplus to take to the stores in town.

The amount of butter traded at the stores could not be ascertained exactly, but it may safely be estimated at about 25,000 pounds per year, worth approximately \$5,000. The people of the town subsist almost entirely on country butter, and it is known that the stores have a surplus over the town's requirements of more than 5,000 pounds per year, worth about \$1,000, which is shipped out to centralizers as "packing stock" to be "renovated" and sold to city consumers. Most of the merchants ship this butter fairly often as it accumulates; one merchant lets it accumulate in his basement for several weeks, or even months, at a time, shipping out a large quantity two or three times a year.

The following table shows the shipments of "packing stock" from this community by months for 1913:

Month	Pounds	Value	Value per Pound (Cents)
January .....	.....	.....	...
February .....	90	\$18.90	21.0
March .....	.....	.....	...
April .....	226	50.35	22.3
May .....	530	102.32	19.3
June .....	2,090	384.43	18.4
July .....	834	158.46	19.0
August .....	554	100.25	18.1
September .....	138	26.90	19.5
October .....	301	63.21	21.0
November .....	490	110.30	22.5
December .....	.....	.....	...
Total .....	5,253	\$1,015.12	19.3

Most of this country butter is very inferior in quality. Some farmers, however, make a good quality, as for instance the one who supplies the leading hotel of the town. The merchants are not enthusiastic about handling this country butter; the one who handles the most says that each farmer thinks his butter is the very best, and that he can't discriminate between different grades for fear of offending his customers and losing their trade. This merchant trades in eighty or ninety pounds a day sometimes during the height of the season. He sells most of it locally, some even to farmers, and has standing orders of about forty pounds a week with customers in town. He sells it for one or two cents over what he allows the farmers. As packing stock it sells for a cent or two less than he allows farmers.

#### CONCLUSION ON BUTTER- AND CREAM-MARKETING

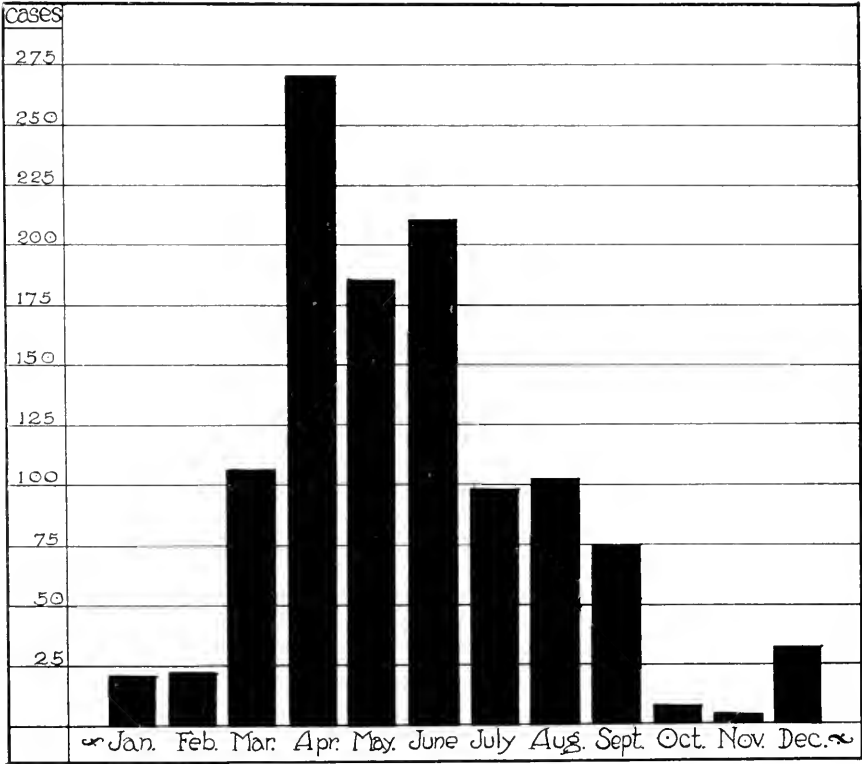
In conclusion, it is interesting to compare the quantities of butter sold by the farmers of this locality in the three different ways described above.

	Pounds of Butter	Per Cent of Total
Sold as product of creamery.....	55,384	65.4
Shipped in form of cream.....	4,350	5.1
Made on farm and traded at stores.....	25,000	29.5
Total .....	84,734	100.0

Of the total butter sold, only 65.4 per cent goes through the creamery. If the amount of butter made on the farm and *consumed* on the farm were known, it would undoubtedly show that less than half of the cream produced in the community is taken to the creamery. On butter traded at the store there is a distinct loss to the farmer, as he never gets more than 20

or 21 cents. In communities where dairying has advanced further, patrons buy butter from their creamery. This community has much to learn in the way of better butter-marketing.

On the northeast edge of the territory covered by the survey there is another coöperative creamery which does about as much business as the one in Ada already described. A few of the farmers visited haul their cream to this creamery, but it gets the great bulk of its patronage from out-



Shipments of Eggs from Ada during 1912

side the district surveyed. It is located about half way between the two railroads and has to have its butter, as well as coal, wood, tubs, and other supplies, hauled about seven miles. Farmers do the hauling, and many have been allowed to pay for their shares in this way. This creamery also handled \$1,100 worth of coal for its members in 1912.

#### THE MARKETING OF EGGS

To dispose of their eggs, farmers follow the time-honored custom of trading them at the store for groceries and other supplies. Very little atten-

tion is paid to raising hens, but some farmers trade in enough eggs to pay their grocery bills. Farmers who were questioned on this matter are apparently well satisfied with present methods; very few had even considered the possibility or desirability of a cash market. When they bring in more eggs than they care to exchange for goods at the time, they are given checks or "tin money" which represents future purchasing power. Very commonly, however, the farmer adjusts his purchases to the amount of trade he has coming to him for his eggs and butter rather than to his actual needs. Under the present system one egg is as good as another; there is no inducement to the farmer to gather them regularly; small eggs are worth in trade as much as large eggs; they are not graded as to color.

The storekeepers sell what they can locally and ship their surplus to outside markets; they turn them over to one man, who handles both their eggs and their butter. This man buys the eggs outright from the merchants; he pays according to market prices; what he pays the merchants one week, the merchants pay the farmers for eggs during the following week. By consolidating shipments he says he receives better prices. He began handling eggs in this way in 1906, and the method is apparently satisfactory to the merchants, and indeed does seem to be an efficient way of handling them. He says that he gets 5 cents a case on shipments to the Twin Cities, and 10 cents to Duluth. Most of his eggs go to the latter city. He is engaged regularly in other business and handles the eggs and butter of the merchants as a side line.

Most of the eggs shipped out in this way go by freight; occasionally there are a few shipments made by farmers directly. The shipments of eggs from Ada during 1912 appear in the following table:

	By Express (Cases)	By Freight (Cases)	Total (Cases)	Average Price per Dozen (Cents)	
January .....	16	5	21	25.5	
February .....	20	2	22	25.5	
March .....	58	49	107	16.4	..
April .....	17	253	270	17.1	
May .....	7	178	185	16.1	
June .....	4	206	210	15.0	
July .....	2	95	97	15.0	
August .....	2	100	102	16.3	
September .....	1	74	75	18.7	
October .....	1	6	7	21.0	
November .....	4	...	4	24.0*	
December .....	32	...	32	25.0*	
Total .....	164	968	1,132	18.4	

\*Estimated.

It will be noticed from this table that eggs are shipped by express in the winter when shipments are light, and by freight during the months of heavy production. It should be remembered that these shipments represent only the surplus over and above the amounts consumed by the town.

The merchants keep no record of their egg exchanges and have but little notion of the exact quantity traded in. One merchant, who probably receives more than any other, estimated the quantity of eggs taken in by months as follows:

	Cases
January .....	10
February .....	10
March .....	18
April .....	100
May .....	160
June .....	160
July .....	100
August .....	75
September .....	50
October .....	40
November .....	20
December .....	20

#### POULTRY

Very little attention has been given to the marketing of poultry until within recent years. Until about seven years ago there were practically no chickens or turkeys shipped out, although there were a few traded at the stores. When they were brought to town in any quantity, there was no market for them. The man who handles eggs and butter for the merchants took hold of the poultry business in 1906 and began buying direct from farmers. The business grew rapidly from year to year until in 1912 it had become too much for him to handle with his other interests, and some of the leading merchants took it up. They take poultry in trade in fairly large quantities during the fall of the year, and ship to large cities.

The approximate shipments of poultry, alive and dressed, during 1912 by months, were as follows:

	Alive (Pounds)	Dressed (Pounds)	Total (Pounds)
January .....	300	50	350
February .....			
March .....	30		30
April .....			
May .....	120		120
June .....			

	Alive (Pounds)	Dressed (Pounds)	Total (Pounds)
July .....	.....	.....	.....
August .....	.....	.....	.....
September .....	1,250	210	1,460
October .....	2,850	22	2,872
November .....	13,047	9,817	22,864
December .....	1,500	5,169	6,669
Totals .....	19,097	15,268	34,365

Practically two thirds of the total poultry shipments were in November; 86 per cent were in November and December together. More than half (55.6 per cent) were shipped alive in coops. December was the only month when dressed shipments exceeded live shipments. In November, turkeys formed 8,807 pounds of the 13,047 pounds of live poultry shipped.

month 11/2

## CHAPTER IV

### THE STORES AND INDUSTRIES OF THE VILLAGE

The first store made its appearance about 1876. In the spring of 1877 there were in the village one general store and one hotel, one grain and seed warehouse, a small railroad station, and two dwelling houses. A second store was started in 1878 and a third in 1879. For the next three or four years the village grew rapidly and stores multiplied. In 1881 there were three general stores, two hardware stores, one drug store, and two hotels. Two new general stores were started that year.

By 1883 the number of stores had increased so rapidly that there were nearly as many at that time as there are to-day. In 1896 one of the local papers enumerated the number of stores and other business and professional establishments of each kind. An attempt has been made in the following table to fit the present situation to this classification, and also to fill it in for 1883 from the advertisements that appeared in the local paper at that time.

NUMBER OF STORES AND OTHER BUSINESS AND PROFESSIONAL ESTABLISHMENTS

	1883	1896	1913
General merchandise stores.....	5	6	5
Grocery and notion stores.....	1	1	1
Fruit stores .....	1	2	*
Clothing stores.....	.	1	2
Jewelry stores.....	2	2	2
Watchmakers .....	2	3	2
Drug stores.....	2	3	2
Banks .....	1	2	2
Newspapers .....	1	2	2
Lumber yards .....	2	2	†2
Machinery stores.....	3	3	3
Hardware stores.....	2	3	4
Furniture stores.....	1	1	2
Harness shops.....	2	3	1
Shoemakers .....	.	1	1
Tailors .....	.	1	3
Milliners .....	1	2	2
Dressmakers .....	1	3	‡
Laundries .....	.	1	.
Barber shops.....	1	1	2



	1883	1896	1913
Photographers .....	.	1	1
Livery stables.....	2	1	1
Blacksmith shops.....	1	4	1
Meat markets.....	1	2	1
Real estate dealers.....	3	3	4
Lawyers .....	3	4	6
Doctors .....	2	3	3
Hotels .....	2	2	2

(\*) A number of stores handle fruit.

(†) Including the lumber yard connected with the sawmill.

(‡) Unknown.

There may have been some stores which did not advertise in 1883, and hence the figures for that year may not be complete. The same store is included under two or more classifications in a few instances; for example, in 1913 one store is reported under both jewelry stores and drug stores, and one of



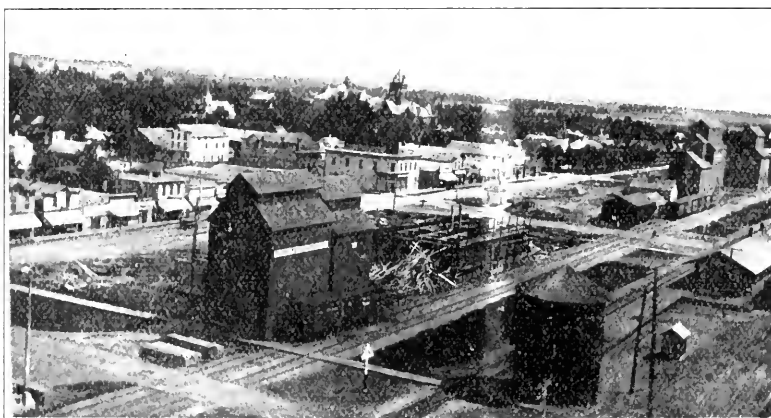
Some of the Principal Stores

the general stores, which has an extensive furniture department, is reported both under "general merchandise" and "furniture." For this reason, totals of the various columns do not reveal the number of separate stores at each date.

The reason why Ada has failed to gain appreciably as a business center is that the section immediately adjacent to the village has not furnished sufficient business to make up for the gradual cutting down of tributary territory. At first it had a very extensive tributary area, extending fifteen



The Saw Mill and the Lumber Yard



The Village and the Elevators



Bird's-eye View of the Business Section

or twenty miles west into Dakota and a like, or even greater, distance to the east. Furthermore, Crookston (thirty miles away) was the nearest point of any importance on the north, and Moorhead (also thirty miles) on the south. The advent of the railroads fourteen miles west of Ada in 1883 and fourteen miles east in 1886 has already been described. The opening of the line on the west had little apparent effect at first, because the number of settlers was increasing so rapidly as to overcome, in part at least, the cutting-off of trade territory in that direction. By 1886, however, when the eastern half of the tributary country was cut off, land had been pretty well taken up; and since this event was contemporaneous with a period of short crops and low wheat prices the effect was anything but stimulating. The injury of crops by floods in 1885 and subsequent years also had an effect on the business of the stores.

Nothing better illustrates the dependence of a country town on the extent and prosperity of the tributary farming community than the history of this village. During the period of stagnation after 1886 there were numerous failures; storekeepers sold out and moved away; the number of farm foreclosure sales was enormous. It was not until 1891 that prosperity returned to the farmers, for in that year there was a huge wheat crop and the price of wheat was high. The village also prospered. One storekeeper who is still in business said that 1891 was the best year he ever had, that he was dealing in lumber at that time and that he sold twenty-eight carloads for cash in three months during that year.

Beginning with 1893 another period of stagnation set in due to low wheat prices, poor crops, and "hard times" in general. Floods played their part in cutting down the wheat yield. Matters began to improve again in 1898 and there was continued progress until about 1905 when a series of wet years retarded the agricultural development. The trade territory had also been gradually cut down. Villages grew up at points on the railroad about ten miles north and ten miles south; elevators were built at points only six miles north and six miles south, with a store at each place, and a lumber yard at the northern point; and finally two country stores appeared, one about eight miles northeast and another eight miles northwest, each taking away some trade from the stores of Ada. The last serious flood to date was in 1909, and since that time the community has been making fair progress.

In the early days the inhabitants of Ada believed that their village was destined to develop into an important city. Hope was held out to them for many years that they would get additional railway facilities. During the eighties and even the nineties the local papers were continually reporting rumors of new railroads which would probably reach the village. It was especially desired that the line running westward from Duluth should pass through Ada; it was a disappointment that this line should have been

built through Crookston, thirty miles to the north, especially as this event practically put an end to the hope that Ada might become a junction point.

Early hopes and occasional periods of prosperity left a legacy of business establishments far exceeding in number the present requirements of the community. It is safe to say that for many years there have not been more than one or two stores that have really made any money, i. e., profits over and above fair wages of management to the proprietors, and many haven't even made that. Some of the storekeepers are able to maintain their present standards of living through the savings and investments from early prosperous times and not from current profits of their stores.

In 1912 there were thirty-three stores, including the lumber yard, a photographer, two coal dealers, and the Standard Oil Company. There were also three saloons. The total volume of business was considerable, as shown in the following table, where a rough classification of the different kinds of stores is given, and where some of the figures are estimated.

#### BUSINESS OF THE STORES IN 1912

	Gross Sales
5 general stores.....	\$125,820
5 hardware and farm machinery stores.....	88,536
2 clothing and 1 miscellaneous men's and women's furnishings .....	65,927
2 butcher shops.....	27,850
1 bakery and restaurant, 2 restaurants with light gro- ceries, and 1 grocery.....	35,612
2 millinery stores.....	5,000
3 saloons .....	55,000
2 coal dealers and Standard Oil Company.....	21,000
All other stores.....	75,000
	<hr/>
	\$500,000

Among "all other stores" the most important are one lumber dealer, two tailors (there were three in 1913), one jewelry store, one combination drug, jewelry, and general variety, one heating and plumbing concern, and one harness shop.

In connection with this total of about \$500,000, which represents the annual business of the stores, it will be remembered that the estimated value of farm products marketed through the village was a little over \$300,000. This latter figure represents roughly the aggregate annual money income of farmers in the territory tributary to Ada, and also their aggregate purchasing power, or amount spent at the stores, with the exception of such sums as were spent for professional services, or sent away to catalogue houses, or paid in taxes, or deposited in savings accounts in the

banks, etc. A large amount of business also comes to the stores from farmers that market their products through other villages. Farmers account for about three fifths of the \$500,000 business of the stores. The general stores get about two thirds of their business from farmers; the hardware and machinery dealers, an even larger proportion; on the other hand, the saloons, included with stores in this \$500,000 total, got the bulk of their trade from the village people, and there are other stores of which this is true. It must be remembered that this town is larger than the average prairie village, that it is a county seat, and that it has a sawmill which employs many hands, as well as other manufacturing interests described below. On account of these factors, the village inhabitants have

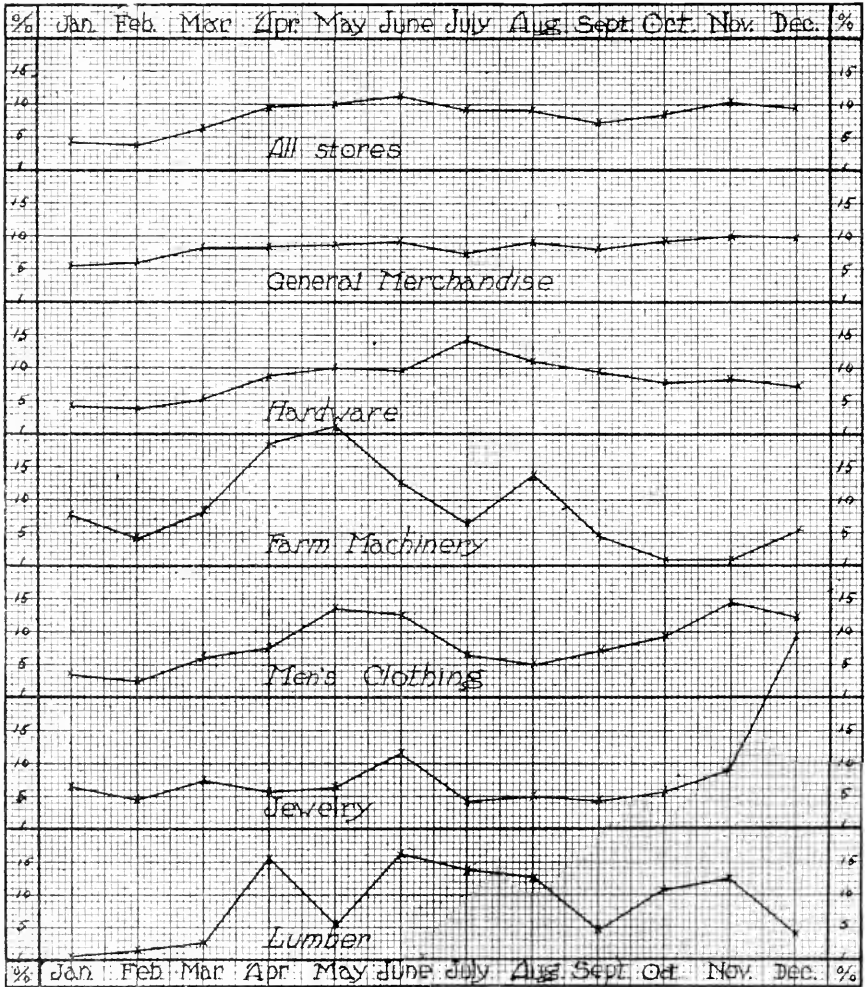


The Hotel and the Stores

sufficient buying power to account for a relatively large proportion of the store business. The great dependence of the village stores on the farming population, both directly and indirectly, however, is clearly apparent.

From *a priori* reasoning, it was believed, when this investigation was begun, that a historical survey of the mercantile business of the town would reveal in an instructive way the development of specialization in merchandising. It was found, however, that for thirty years, specialization had advanced but little. What specialization there has been came about during the first five or six years of the settlement of the village. Hardware and farm machinery have been handled by a separate class of dealers from almost the very first; there have been at least one jewelry store and one drug store for over thirty years. A store handling furniture exclusively was

started during the summer of 1913, but this does not mark a new development of specialization, unless, indeed, this one should prove permanently successful. There was an exclusive furniture store as early as 1883, but this and subsequent attempts failed. There are two stores which handle nothing



Distribution of Sales of Retail Stores by Months, 1912 (Expressed as Per Cents of Total Annual Sales)

but men's clothing and furnishings. One of these is perhaps the most successful and best managed store in town.

The general store handles groceries, boots, and shoes, and ladies' clothing and furnishings. The most important in each is groceries. There is

but one store in town that handles groceries alone, and this is a small one. Boots and shoes are sold by at least eight different stores. The only one that handles them exclusively is the village cobbler who carries a fair stock of shoes for sale.

That the mercantile business of the town is split up among a large number of stores is shown in the following table which classifies the thirty-three stores according to their gross annual sales.

Annual Sales	Number of Stores
Under \$5,000.....	6
\$5,000 to \$10,000.....	5
\$10,000 to \$15,000.....	9
\$15,000 to \$20,000.....	4
\$20,000 to \$25,000.....	4
\$25,000 to \$30,000.....	1
\$30,000 to \$35,000.....	2
\$35,000 to \$40,000.....	2

The following table and accompanying diagram show the percentage of total annual sales of different kinds of stores each month during the year:

TABLE VI  
PERCENTAGE OF ANNUAL SALES OF RETAIL STORES FOR EACH MONTH

MONTH	KIND OF STORE						
	General	Hard-ware	Farm machin-ery	Men's clothing	Jewelry	Lumber	All Kinds
January.....	5.4	4.0	7.5	3.5	6.5	0.8	4.3
February.....	6.0	3.8	0.4	2.6	4.6	1.6	3.9
March.....	8.1	5.3	8.1	6.0	7.4	2.5	6.4
April.....	8.3	8.8	18.4	7.4	5.9	15.5	9.7
May.....	8.8	10.0	21.0	13.4	6.4	5.2	10.0
June.....	9.2	9.6	12.7	12.5	11.5	16.1	11.2
July.....	7.4	14.1	6.2	6.5	4.3	13.8	9.1
August.....	9.1	11.3	13.8	5.1	5.0	12.7	9.2
September.....	8.2	9.6	4.7	7.0	4.4	4.6	7.3
October.....	9.4	7.9	1.0	9.2	5.8	10.6	8.6
November.....	10.1	8.4	1.0	14.5	9.0	12.6	10.5
December.....	10.0	7.2	5.3	12.3	29.2	4.0	9.8

It will be observed that for all stores shown in the table, the sales of January and February are very light, and that they increase gradually to a maximum in June, although November and December are also heavy months. The June maximum is due partly to large sales of farm machinery and men's clothing in that month. The business of the general stores, consisting largely of groceries, is the most uniform throughout the

year. Over half of the farm machinery is sold during the months of April, May, and June. Men's clothing shows maximum points in spring and fall; jewelry in June and December, the two months when gift-giving is most common; lumber shows extreme variations, with the heaviest months during the summer and fall.

GENERAL APPEARANCE OF STORES

The twenty-three principal stores may be roughly classified according to their general appearance as follows: good, seven; fair, seven; poor, nine. The principal items considered under general appearance are window display, arrangement of store, character of fixtures, cleanliness and arrangement of stock on shelves and in cases. Of the seven classified as good in appearance, three or four deserve special praise. For example, one of the hardware stores would be a credit to a town several times larger; the leading clothing store has glass cabinets in which the suits are hung on hangers; the jewelry store is particularly attractive and has a large line of carefully selected and artistically arranged goods. When the town went "dry" in the spring of 1913, the leading saloon was transformed into a drug store, the bar itself having been converted into a soda fountain. No expense or pains has been spared in making this a thoroughly up-to-date store in every respect. (There is apparently no intention of changing back to a saloon if the town votes for license again.) Three of the five general stores appear to keep their stock moving and have their shelves in good order; the other two have goods which have apparently been on the shelves for years. All of the twenty-three stores have electric lights. Three of them heat with steam or hot water, one with a hot-air furnace, and nineteen with coal or wood stoves.

STORE MANAGEMENT

Although the stores were liberal in giving information, most of them have such poor accounting systems that their figures are largely in the form of estimates, especially those dealing with value of stock, amount paid for merchandise, and expenses. The twenty-three principal stores may be classified roughly as follows with regard to the efficiency of their accounting systems:

Kind of System	Condition	Number of Stores
Double entry.....	good	5
	poor	1
National Cash Register system.....	good	1
	poor	1
Single entry.....	good	3
	poor	12



There are really only six stores (outside of the lumber yard) that have efficient, well-kept, accounting systems. Among those classified as "single entry" there are some who have practically no system at all. Some do not even keep a record of sales. At least half of them take no inventory. Of the five general stores, only two have accounts in such shape as to enable the proprietors to ascertain anything definite about the condition of the business. Of the twenty-three stores only seven have cash registers, while one has wire carriers and a cashier.

### COST OF DOING BUSINESS

For most of the stores investigated accurate operating costs could not be obtained. There is the greatest diversity of practice even where attempts are made to keep cost accounts. Only five of the leading merchants take out and charge salaries for themselves, and some of those that do, take out small salaries that do not represent fair wages of management. The amounts so charged range from \$40 to \$100 per month, two taking out \$75. Members of the proprietor's family work in the store in at least eight or ten cases, and with two exceptions no salaries are paid. Three or four charge interest to expense and one or two depreciation on fixtures and building.

The proportions of operating expenses to gross sales in four of the general merchandise stores in 1912 were approximately 19.2 per cent, 17.1 per cent, 17.0 per cent, and 16.5 per cent respectively. The average was 17.5 per cent. For the purpose of making these computations comparable, however, proprietors' salaries have been arbitrarily added for two of the four stores, and raised for a third. In no case, however, is more than \$75 per month allowed. If \$100 per month had been allowed, the average cost would have been 18.7 per cent. Three of these stores are among the best-managed in town. Among some which have not adopted such up-to-date methods, the cost of doing business appears to be lower. The net profits in these other stores are not so large in proportion, however, because of less frequent turn-over of stock, poor selection of merchandise, etc. In three or four of the better-managed specialty stores, the cost of doing business appears to be about 14 or 15 per cent. Many of the storekeepers have tried to compute the relation between operating costs and sales in this way, but most of them have failed to figure in salaries for themselves and other items, with the result that the figures they have obtained are too low.

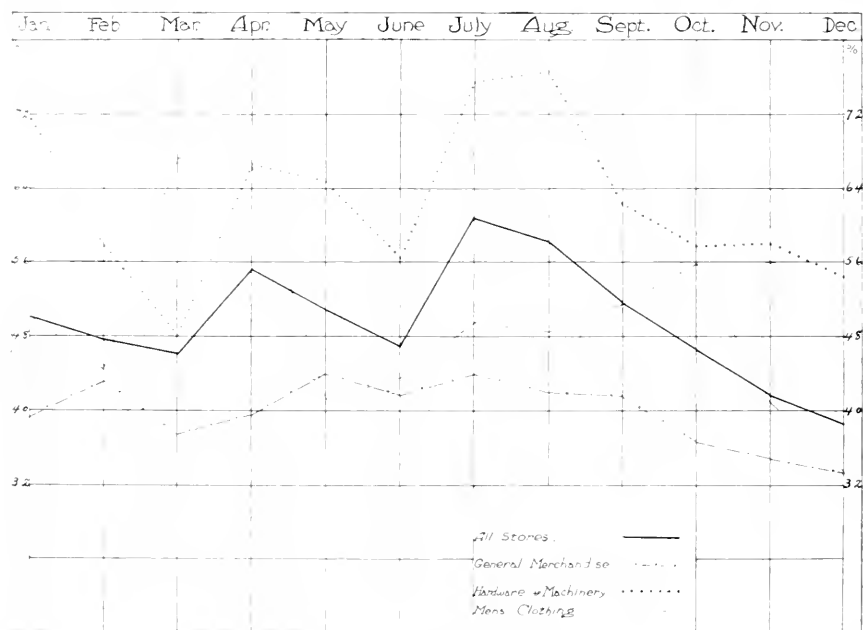
The most important item in expenses is salaries of clerks, which run from \$40 to \$65 a month for men, with the average almost exactly \$50. The salaries of women are lower. There are two stores that employ four clerks regularly, one that employs three, and six that employ two. Except on account of occasional special sales, the number of salesmen employed re-

mains fairly constant during the first eight months of the year, and increases slightly for the last four months.

Of the twenty-three leading stores there were seventeen that advertised during the year 1912. The average amount spent for advertising was \$223. There were three stores that spent over \$500; two of these spent between \$800 and \$900. These two, by the way, had the largest volume of business and the greatest net profits. All of the general stores make deliveries in town. Newspaper advertisements in 1883 indicate that they delivered goods even at that date. The telephone is used freely in giving orders, just as in larger towns and cities.

#### CASH AND CREDIT BUSINESS

In a region where there is still so much dependence on crops that are harvested in the fall, credit business naturally plays an important part in merchandising. With the gradual development of dairying and stock- and poultry-raising, however, conditions are not as bad as they were formerly.



Per Cent That Credit Sales Were of Total Sales, by Months, 1912, for All Stores and for Various Kinds of Stores

One of the merchants said, "Take away the cow and the chicken and we would be in the clutches of credit to-day, just as we were twenty or thirty years ago. While my credit business used to run up to \$6,000, now it seldom exceeds \$3,000." It has come to be the custom for people living in

town to settle their accounts monthly. The leading merchants have been working toward this end. Farmers' accounts are allowed to run longer. Some business men in town, however, render their bills only once a year. One merchant who is striving to get his finances on a monthly basis said that he had not yet been able to induce his drayman to render a bill oftener than once a year. The merchants themselves have a curious custom of allowing their purchases from each other to run for a year and then settling balances.

The proportion of credit business to total sales varies for different months of the year, as would be expected. The following table shows this proportion by months in 1912 for eight of the leading stores together:

Month	Per Cent that Credit Business is of Total Sales
January .....	50.0
February .....	47.5
March .....	46.0
April .....	55.1
May .....	50.8
June .....	46.9
July .....	60.9
August .....	58.3
September .....	51.5
October .....	46.7
November .....	41.6
December .....	38.7

The proportion of credit business varies for different kinds of stores, as shown in the following table and in the diagram on page 62.

TABLE VII  
PERCENTAGE THAT CREDIT BUSINESS IS OF TOTAL SALES

MONTH	KIND OF STORE		
	General merchandise	Hardware and machinery	Men's clothing
	Per cent	Per cent	Per cent
January .....	39.2	71.5	50.0
February .....	43.0	57.9	44.3
March .....	37.4	48.0	67.2
April .....	39.7	66.5	66.2
May .....	43.9	64.6	41.1
June .....	41.4	56.2	43.4
July .....	43.9	75.4	49.5
August .....	41.8	76.6	48.5
September .....	41.5	62.3	51.4
October .....	35.7	57.7	55.9
November .....	32.9	58.0	40.9
December .....	33.1	54.4	33.5

A record of the cash and credit business by months was obtained from one store for the year 1892 as well as for 1912. The proportion of credit business to total sales for each month is shown in the following table.

	Per Cent for 1892	Per Cent for 1912
January .....	41.8	42.0
February .....	52.8	49.7
March .....	56.1	47.3
April .....	64.9	54.3
May .....	58.2	54.5
June .....	64.6	55.0
July .....	65.3	49.2
August .....	69.7	52.6
September .....	72.5	46.0
October .....	49.4	38.3
November .....	38.9	38.0
December .....	38.5	36.0

#### OTHER FORMS OF SERVICE

In addition to the mercantile business of the stores, which amounted to practically \$500,000 in 1912, there are certain professional and other services, as well as a few manufacturing industries, which furnish important means of livelihood in the village. Some of the more important forms of services are as follows:

Form of Service	Number Engaged	Approximate Gross Business
Lawyers .....	6	\$ 10,000
Physicians .....	3	13,000
Dentists .....	2	6,000
Barbers .....	2	3,000
Veterinarians .....	2	4,500
Hotels .....	2	65,000
Newspaper and printing plants.....	2	
Garages .....	2	
Livery and draymen.....	3	
Abstracter .....	1	
Blacksmith .....	1	
Total .....		\$101,500

In addition to these there should be mentioned real estate men (five firms), whose productive capacity no attempt has been made to measure. There are also of course teachers, ministers, music teachers, seamstresses, etc.

## MAIL-ORDER COMPETITION

A careful attempt was made to determine the volume of mail-order business of this community by asking each family canvassed the amount purchased from catalogue houses during the preceding year. With but few exceptions, this question was answered frankly; although in many instances the replies were rather vague because the exact amount purchased could not be recalled. The following table presents the results, and although the figures may not represent accurately the whole amount purchased in this way, yet there is reason to believe that the error is slight.

	Farmers	Village People	Total
Number of families reporting purchases			
from catalogue houses.....	130	81	211
Percentage of total families visited.....	64.6	41.2	52.5
Total amount of such purchases, 1912...	\$5,420.00	\$3,450.00	\$8,870.00
Average amount purchased per family reporting .....	\$41.70	\$42.59	\$42.04

The most noticeable thing about these figures is that the total purchases from catalogue houses amounted to only \$8,870 for the year 1912. Considerable allowance might be made for possible error, and even then the amount would be surprisingly small when compared with the business of the stores. But before this comparison is made, a number of modifications must be considered. In the first place, there are certain kinds of stores, such as the bakery and restaurants, the coal dealers, the meat shops, and the saloons, that do not have to compete with mail-order houses. In the second place, the stores do a certain amount of business with farmers beyond the district covered by the survey. The number of regular customers not covered in the survey is not large—perhaps fifty in the country and an equal number in the village—but since Ada is the county seat and the largest town in the county people come occasionally from distant points, and many often make rather extensive purchases on these occasional visits.

Allowances being made for the factors mentioned above, the business of the stores which is open to mail-order competition amounted to about \$380,000. Assuming that four fifths of the regular customers of the stores were canvassed, the total mail-order business of the immediate trade territory was about \$11,000, or only about three per cent of the business done by the stores. It was evident very early in the investigation that the amount of business sent to catalogue houses was much smaller than the merchants imagined, but that it should be only about three per cent was surprising. After the most liberal allowances have been made for other factors that might be considered, such as occasional purchases by well-to-do people of the

village on their trips to larger cities, the total purchases outside the village are safely under five per cent of the gross business of the stores.

On the whole, the attitude of the farmers toward the stores was decidedly friendly. Many of them of course felt that they were getting "stung" at the stores, just as people everywhere feel, but most of them said they believed in patronizing the local stores as much as possible. Some had had unsatisfactory experiences with mail-order houses and had given them up on that account. Although no definite figures were obtained, perhaps furniture and rugs were the articles most frequently mentioned as being bought from catalogue houses. Only a few buy groceries in this way; many send for dress goods and boys' clothing and overalls; a few buy shoes, and one farmer who buys very extensively in this way said that he had found greater saving on shoes than on any other article. Two cream separators were reported as bought at a great saving; one the purchaser wasn't satisfied with; the other had never given a bit of trouble during nine years of operation. Other articles mentioned were hardware, blankets, and ladies' coats.

The attitude of the various merchants with regard to the mail-order business varied; they all had vastly exaggerated notions of its volume; some of the merchants felt very bitterly that farmers should send away at all, and were apparently sincere in their declarations that they had no moral right to do so. Others were more temperate in their attitudes, and said they didn't blame farmers for sending away if they could buy things more cheaply elsewhere. The parcel post had apparently not made any appreciable difference, for most farmers had not had occasion to use it during the first six months of its operation. Some even had to have it explained to them. Merchants had evidently found much more use for it than had the farmers.

#### THE SAWMILL

By far the most important manufacturing establishment is the saw and planing mill, originally built in 1897, destroyed by fire in 1906, and rebuilt in 1907. The logs that feed this mill are floated down the Wild Rice River from a region in the White Earth Indian Reservation about fifty or sixty miles due east of Ada, but probably twice that distance by river. The Wild Rice River is small and has but little water for floating logs, and much difficulty is encountered in bringing them through. The lakes at the sources have to be dammed in order to collect sufficient water to float the logs. A large and experienced crew is necessary to make the most of the water when it is let out of the lakes. During the summer of 1913 over one hundred men, mostly Indians and half-breeds, were employed in this way, the drive finally reaching Ada not until August, although it had started from the head of the river in the spring. Fortunately this crew did not tarry at Ada after the drive reached that point because that town had voted out the saloons in the previous spring. The supply of timber which has kept this mill going

for several years is nearly exhausted. The management announces that it will run one more season and then either dismantle or sell the mill.

The sawmill runs only during the spring, summer, and fall; the planing mill the year round. During 1912 the sawmill ran from April 15 to November 15. That the mill plays an important part in the economic life of the village is apparent from the following statement of the average number of men employed at different periods during the year:

	Men
January 1, 1912 to April 15.....	30
April 15 to July 15.....	150
July 15 to November 15.....	90
November 15 to January 1, 1913.....	30

The total wages paid in 1912 amounted to \$43,260. In that year about 12,000,000 feet of lumber were turned out, and about 11,100,000 feet were sold. At \$12 per thousand, this would amount to \$133,000. The company buys supplies in large quantities from local stores when the drive approaches Ada, and large quantities of hay and oats the year round. Waste wood is sold to village people and farmers at low prices, and this furnishes a large part of the fuel consumed in the community. About 70 per cent of the output is shipped to Chicago and east thereof; the rest is shipped to Minnesota and North Dakota points. The company sells direct to lumber yards and to manufacturers who use lumber. The principal products are surfaced lumber, rough lumber, laths, and molding.

On account of its manipulation of the water flow of the Wild Rice River, the lumber company has incurred the enmity of the farmers, who believe that these manipulations have been partially responsible for floods that have occurred in recent years. Without question the stoppage of the water has seriously affected two small roller mills, one considerably above Ada, and one between Ada and the Red River, and the proprietors of these establishments have been awarded damages. Many other lawsuits have resulted from the operations of the company, and as farmers generally act as jurymen, the cases are pretty generally decided against the sawmill. Economically the sawmill is of no importance to the agricultural community; it is only through giving employment to people in the village, and stimulating the business of the stores, that it is of importance. In addition to permanent inhabitants in the village that it employs, it brings in laborers from outside when the sawmill is in operation.

#### THE FLOUR MILL

The inhabitants of Ada were eager to have a flour mill from the very earliest days of settlement. Inducements were offered outside parties to

erect a mill, but it was not until 1895 that one was finally built. Its capacity was only 75 barrels per day until the spring of 1913 when it was increased to 150 barrels per day; the capital stock is \$25,000, owned by seven shareholders; it operates by steam power, using soft coal which is obtained from Duluth in carload lots; there are usually eight employees. For several years the mill has been running 15 hours a day on one shift, which makes a pretty long work day.

The mill sells its product over the northern half of Minnesota, only about one quarter of the output being marketed in and about Ada. The principal market is the towns of the Iron Range. When flour can not be sold elsewhere at regular wholesale prices, Duluth jobbers stand ready to take it, but this has to be sold at a close margin. Flour is shipped only in carload lots, and one man is kept on the road about half his time drumming up trade.

This flour mill has to compete with the large Minneapolis millers even in Ada; Gold Medal, Pillsbury, and Occident flour are all handled by the local storekeepers. Although many small mills in neighboring towns have gone out of business during recent years, the management of this mill believes that the establishment is not in danger as long as it uses up-to-date machinery and methods.

The total output of the flour mill in 1912 was 10,057 barrels of flour, as well as large quantities of bran, shorts, etc. The mill did some custom grinding, about \$1,000 in 1912. The total value of the output in 1912 was about \$70,000. The importance of the mill as a market for the farmers has been described in the description of grain-marketing.

#### THE CIGAR FACTORY

The cigar factory started in 1901, and has apparently built up an established and profitable business. It buys its leaf in Chicago and Milwaukee, including some Pure Havana which goes into ten-cent cigars, and good quality domestic leaf for five-cent cigars, which form the bulk of the output. The output in 1912 was 329,000 cigars; at an average of \$40 per thousand, this output was worth \$13,160.

This establishment sells its goods to the stores in Ada and to towns in the surrounding country. The proprietor spends about half his time on the road, and covers many towns lying east and west of Ada in his automobile. At first he relied on journeyman cigar-makers, but they were hard to get and keep continuously, so he has followed the practice of teaching local people the trade. In this way he holds them longer and labor costs him less. He employs from seven to nine people much of the time, including young girls of the village. The shop is an open one, although it was at first run as a union shop.



## THE TOW MILL

The tow mill is one of eight or ten such mills owned by a large corporation which takes the flax fiber from these mills to its main plant in the southern part of the State and makes it into a packing that is used for insulation in cold storage plants and refrigerator cars, and also for stuffing furniture. The mill in Ada was started in 1903. A bonus of \$500 was provided among the business men, each giving \$25 apiece. This is the only bonus that Ada has ever given to an industry, although the city gave the sawmill certain privileges when it first started.

The mill takes flax straw, as brought in by the farmers, runs it through eighteen pairs of corrugated rollers to break it up, and a shaker to clean out the waste. By this process the straw is reduced just about one-half in weight, and is then shipped to the central plant where the process is completed. The principal object of the mill is, therefore, to reduce the weight and save transportation costs. Steam furnishes the power and the waste is used for fuel. The mill operates only in winter; during the season of 1912-1913 it ran eight months from the middle of October to the middle of June. In this time it used 1,050 tons of flax straw, for which it paid \$2.50 per ton or \$2,625. The output was 527 tons, valued at about \$4,500.

The mill employs fifteen men while in operation, most of whom are paid only \$1.75 a day. Wages are very low in Ada during the winter, and there are many people who can not get employment at all. The total pay roll is but little over \$2,000. The mill is an old "shack" which cost only about \$700. The value of the machinery is about \$1,300.

## OTHER INDUSTRIES

In addition to these more important manufacturing establishments there are some of minor importance which deserve mention. These include the bakery, harness shop, two newspaper and printing plants, a broom factory, and a creamery. The bakery and harness shop have been included under stores. The bake shop is a most interesting establishment, inasmuch as it does a surprising amount of business for a small country town, where the inhabitants might be supposed to have little use for bakery products. And yet this bakery makes each day about 150 loaves of bread (there are about 25 regular customers for bread), 20 dozen of doughnuts, 300 buns, and about 12 pies. A part of this output is sold over the lunch counter, where from 100 to 150 cups of coffee are served per day, together with lunches running from 10 to 25 cents in value. There are no regular boarders, but the proprietor says there is a steady stream of customers from early morning until late at night, most of whom have homes or regular boarding places but want lunches at odd hours. Auto parties and traveling salesmen also supply part of this trade. Besides this bake shop there are two other lunch rooms, each doing considerable business.

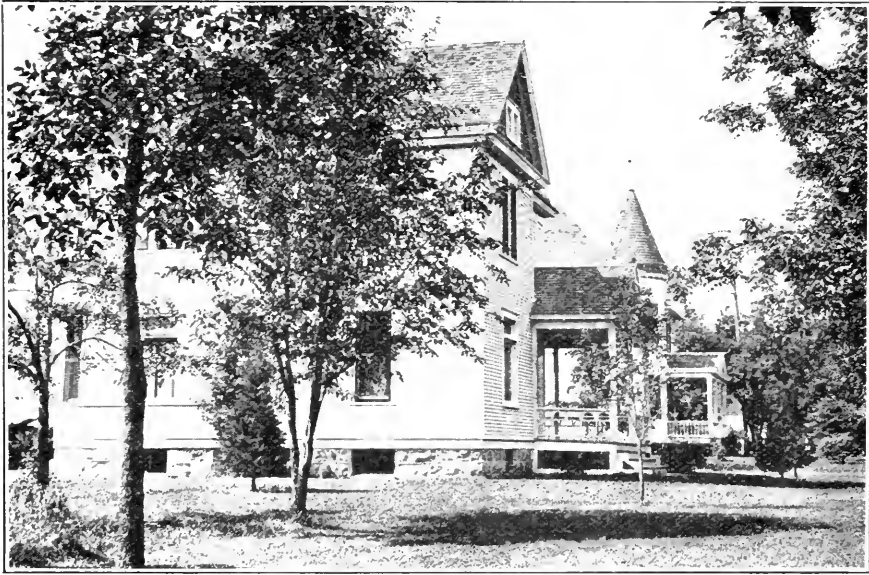
There are two newspapers published in the village, each having a circulation throughout the whole county. One is a Republican paper, and the other a Democratic. The subscription of each is \$1.50 per year and the gross circulation of each from 1,200 to 1,500. The paid circulation, however, is considerably under 1,000 for each. Advertising is a more important source of revenue than subscriptions, and job printing is another important item of revenue. Of the advertising, about 90 per cent is local and 10 per cent foreign. Both papers use "patent insides," but one prints all but two pages of its issue. The combined business of the two newspaper plants, including subscriptions, advertising, commercial printing, and county and legal work, is approximately \$10,000 a year.

The broom factory is a little shop run by a blind man. This man is an old resident of Ada, and lost his eyesight some years ago. He learned how to make brooms at the Minnesota State School for the Blind, and performs unassisted every operation from the selection of his straw to the finishing-off of the broom. He can not find a market, however, for all the brooms that he can make; comparatively few people in the village buy his wares. The stores do not carry his brooms, but sell large numbers of factory brooms that are brought in from the outside. They claim that such brooms have a better appearance and finish than those made by the blind man, and that therefore the people in town prefer them. As one merchant said, "It is purely a business proposition"! While the survey was in progress there was a movement on foot among the stores to agree not to handle brooms from the outside, and it seemed that there were at least a few citizens of the village who were heartily ashamed of their neighbors for not patronizing this home industry.

## CHAPTER V

### HOW THE VILLAGE PEOPLE LIVE

Ada is far more attractive than the ordinary prairie village. The railroad runs through the center of the town; the two main business streets run parallel to it, one on either side. Between the railroad and the street on the west side there is a little park with lawns and walks. There are a number of well-kept brick buildings on the business streets, and there are mature trees which improve the appearance of the village. The better stores are on the west side of the railroad; the more attractive residence section is on the east side. The streets are broad and fairly well kept; there are cement walks along many of the principal streets.

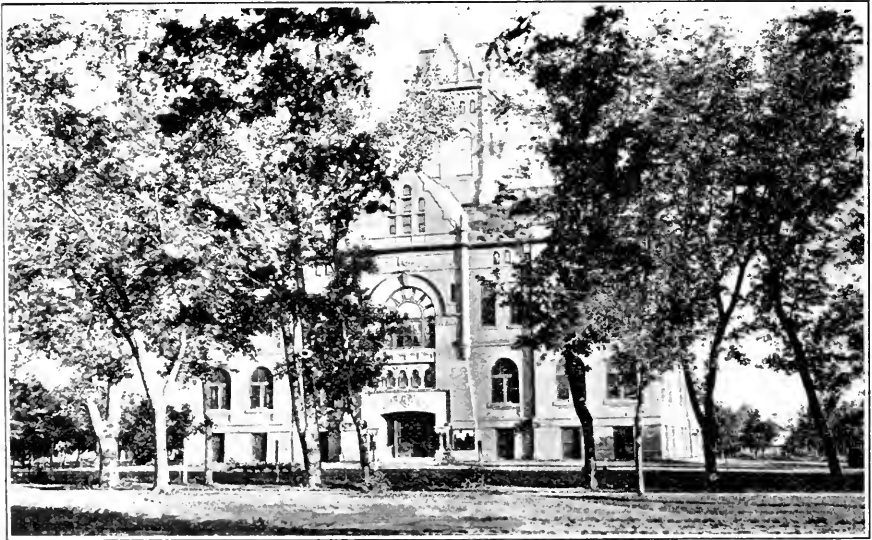


A Village Scene

On the whole the villagers live in comfortable and attractive houses. Of the 201 families visited, 72 per cent own their homes. The average number of rooms in all houses is 6.9; in houses occupied by owners alone, 7.4; by renters alone, 5.6. The monthly rent paid by renters ranged from \$4 and \$5 to \$12 and \$15, with an average of \$8.44, or an average per room of only \$1.51. Many of the rented houses are very small, and very few have any modern improvements. The yards of the village homes are large, and 74 per cent of the residents keep their lawns mowed.

One hundred sixty-six of the 201 families visited, or 82.5 per cent, heat their houses with coal or wood stoves. All but a few of these use coal. There are 16 houses with hot-water heat and a like number with hot-air furnaces. The hot-air furnaces are mostly crude brick casings built around an iron fire box. In addition to the heating apparatus 79 families, or 39 per cent of the total, reported oil stoves which they used for cooking during the summer.

The number of comforts and conveniences in the houses is rather surprising. Sixty per cent of the houses are lighted by electricity, and 91, or 45 per cent, have electric flatirons. There are 16 families, or 8 per cent of the total, that use vacuum cleaners. Fifty-eight per cent of all families visited have telephones. Fifty-five per cent have running water in the house;



The Court House

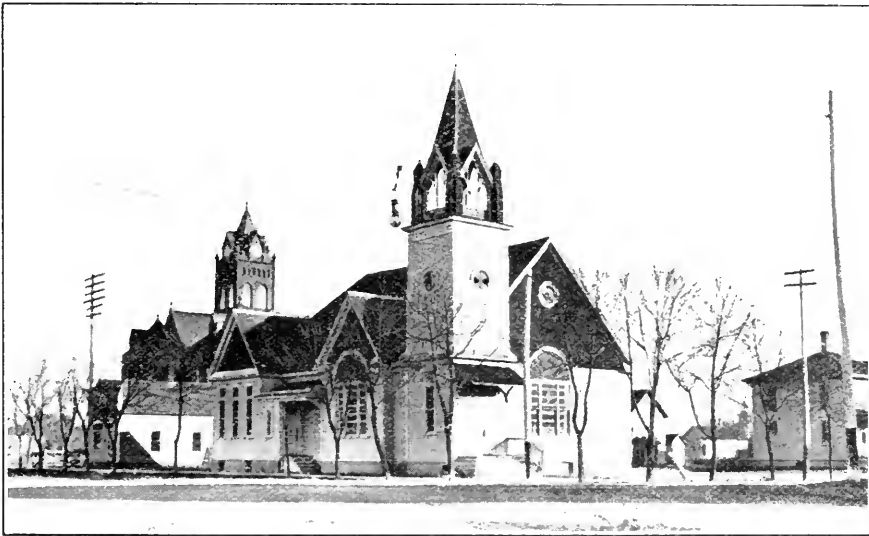
about half of the remainder get their drinking water within five rods of the house, while others have to go some distance. Thirty-six, or 18 per cent of the total, have bathrooms in the house. Half of the families report washing machines, but many of these have fallen into disuse. Washing machines are not used so much in the village as on the farm. About 15 per cent of the houses have screened porches.

Most of the housewives of the village do their own work. There were 37 families, or 18.4 per cent of the total, who reported employment of a hired girl during the year 1912. The average number of days that these 37 families had help was 190, or only a little over a half year. The average expenditure of these 37 families for hired help was \$93.83, and the average

wages per week were \$3.57. Twenty-eight families, or 14 per cent of the total, hire women to do their washing. Ninety-six families, or 48 per cent of the total, hire dressmakers to do at least a part of the sewing.

#### SOCIAL LIFE IN THE VILLAGE

In the early days Ada was undoubtedly a lively little town. An item in the local paper in 1883 informs us that traveling men said that Ada was the "liveliest town on the road." Another item states that "Ada is fast becoming the Paris of the Red River Valley. For music and pleasure her people take the lead and all the surrounding villages dance to her music." Dances, card parties, church socials, and home entertainments were of very frequent occurrence. The brass band was in great demand not only in Ada,



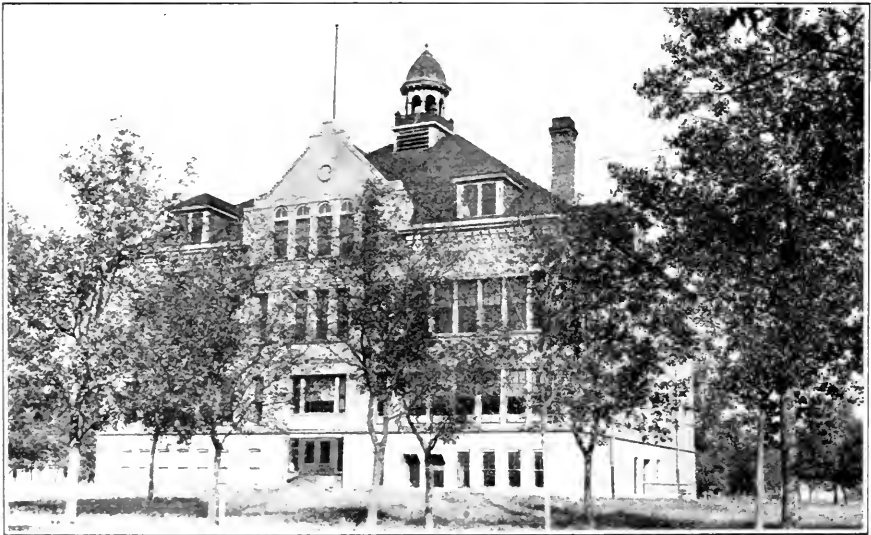
A Village Church

but in surrounding towns. *Pinafore* was given by local talent in 1884. A sportmen's club was organized in that year, mainly to enforce the game laws. Shooting prairie chickens always has been and still is one of the principal recreations for the men. Roller skating became the rage in 1884 and a "large new rink" was built in 1885. This same rink to-day serves as a very poor excuse for an opera house, the only one in town.

This great social activity lasted until about 1887; numerous organizations had been formed, such as a dramatic club, a toboggan club, and a military company. Frequent masquerades were held; the town had a successful baseball team; elaborate Fourth-of-July celebrations were held. As trade languished during the latter eighties, however, the gay life and spirit

also of the place apparently languished. In 1888 Ada failed to celebrate the Fourth of July for the first time; social events became less frequent; even the band disbanded. An "old resident" returning in 1893 said, according to the local paper, that "Ada is going backward. Her sidewalks are getting dilapidated. The buildings need painting, and everything looks old."

There have been two noticeable changes in the development of social life in the village since the early days. These are, first, whereas formerly the village people and the farming population mixed freely in the social activities of the village, to-day there is very little social intercourse between the village and the country; and, second, while the people of the village formerly got together for general good times, to-day they are split up into groups or cliques, each group having its own social activities.



The High School

It is said that in the early days there often used to be as many farmers as villagers at the dances in Ada; that the country people frequently drove as much as ten miles with the thermometer well below zero to attend these village functions. The stratification of social groups in the village has undoubtedly had something to do with the change that has come about. Country people seldom attend more than one or two dances a year in the village now; such dances as they do attend usually occur on days like the Fourth of July, and are not heavily attended by certain classes in the village. There is of course much social intercourse between certain families in the village and their relatives in the country, and villagers sometimes venture forth to church suppers in the country. The social ties between

village and country that result from church activities are largely among the Norwegians.

The splitting-up into groups within the village has been developed to such an extent as to be unfortunate. Church affiliation is the principal factor that determines these groups; nationality plays its part. Although the social life revolves largely about the churches, there are numerous societies and lodges, certain details of which are shown in the following table:

TABLE VIII  
VILLAGE SOCIAL ORGANIZATIONS

Societies	Total membership	Rural membership		Number of meetings during year	Average attendance	Purpose
		1913	1908			
Young Ladies' Reading Club.....	16	.....	1	18	12	Study and social
Twentieth Century Club.....	25	.....	.....	18	18	Study and social
Schiller-Verein.....	15	3	3	18	9	Study and soci
Ada Gun Club.....	20	.....	.....	*	*	Recreation
Lodges:						
Modern Woodmen..	68	20	17	7	12	Insurance and fraternal
Yeoman.....	16	6	6	2	7	Insurance and fraternal
I. S. W. A.....	16	2	4	8	8	Insurance and fraternal
Odd Fellows.....	15	3	3	2	8	Sick benefits and fraternal
Masons.....	57	1	2	15	12	Fraternal
Royal Neighbors...	24	4	5	18	10	Insurance and fraternal
Rebekahs.....	12	.....	6	7	10	Fraternal
Eastern Star.....	30	.....	3	18	20	Fraternal

\*Not known.

It will be seen from the table that these organizations have a comparatively small membership, and that some of the lodges hold very few meetings, which are also poorly attended. The insurance feature is the only thing that keeps some of these in existence. There should also be mentioned in this connection the Commercial Club, a thriving organization of business men organized for both social and promotive purposes. This club has large and well-furnished quarters in the City Hall, a brick building, the lower floor of which is occupied by the fire-fighting apparatus, the city offices, and the city jail. The Commercial Club occupies the second floor. It maintains a

small but neat rest room for the accommodation of women visiting the village from the country or surrounding towns.

The Young Ladies' Reading Club was organized in 1891 and has had continuous existence. The active membership is sixteen, and it meets every two weeks during the winter at the houses of members. It usually holds at least one function during the year to which it invites non-members, and it has two club picnics during the summer. At the meetings some member reads a paper or gives a talk on an assigned subject. One season was spent in studying France, its history, literature, art, etc. During the last two years it devoted meetings to the initiative and referendum, woman suffrage, the schools, and subjects in home economics. It is the only organization that has taken up the study of subjects of this nature. Following the discussion, a lunch is served.

The Twentieth Century Club has been in existence since 1901, and became federated with the State Federation of Women's Clubs in 1904. The membership is limited to twenty-five, and the average attendance at meetings in 1912-1913 was eighteen. It meets every two weeks at the houses of members, and meets in the evening to permit the attendance of school teachers. It is primarily a study club, and carries out a regular program at each meeting. Each member responds to the roll call with an account of some important event of general interest that has recently occurred. For the season 1913-1914 this club was planning a study of the modern drama. That this organization is sincere in its wish to be a purely study club is evident from the fact that it allows no refreshments to be served at its regular meetings. It holds at least one gentlemen's evening each year, and generally a social gathering to which non-members are invited. It sends delegates to the annual convention of the State Federation, and also to the District Federation meetings.

The Schiller-Verein was also organized in 1901 among ladies of German descent, with the object of becoming more proficient in the German language and of studying German literature. This club, however, has developed more into a social organization. Originally conversation at the meetings had to be carried on in German, and there was a fine for speaking English. This requirement is not lived up to now. Some of the subjects studied during the last few years have been German musicians, the art of Germany and other countries, and great inventions and inventors. This club always has German refreshments and entertains the men at German suppers about three times during the season. Card-playing is the form of entertainment usually employed. This club is very exclusive and limits its membership to fifteen.

Other organizations which play an important part in the social life among the ladies of the town are the ladies' aid societies of the churches, and the W. C. T. U., which has an active chapter. The extent to which the



people of the village belong to the various organizations is shown in the following table, which indicates the proportion of the 201 families visited which have one or more members in the organizations listed:

	Per cent
Sunday schools .....	44.8
Ladies' aid societies.....	41.2
Young people's societies.....	29.3
Lodges .....	27.3
Literary societies .....	14.9
W. C. T. U.....	13.9

Although social functions are of frequent occurrence in winter, they are confined to the various groups and clubs. Some of the people frequently entertain each other informally at dinner. There are almost no formal calls made, except on new people. It is said that formal calls were made more frequently a few years ago than to-day. Many people complain that there is a surprising amount of snobbishness in this little town; that the people seem very self-centered; that new people often have great difficulty in getting acquainted and in gaining entrance to the social life. These criticisms came not only from people who had been residents for only a short time, but also from old residents who were leaders in the social life.

#### RECREATION

Although 93 per cent of the families report reading as a form of recreation, the reading matter in the village is neither very abundant nor very substantial. There is no public library, although one was started during the eighties and lasted for a few years. The Commercial Club receives books from a traveling library, but these do not have a very wide circulation. Although the matter was not inquired into during the investigation, it was apparent that there are but few private libraries of substantial value.

Fifty-eight per cent of the families are regular subscribers to city daily papers (principally from Minneapolis and St. Paul). Eighty-three per cent take at least one of the two local papers, and 36 per cent take both. Fifty-three per cent have first-class magazines, and the average number of magazines per family for those who take them at all, is 2.8. About 22 per cent take the cheaper magazines, those having a subscription price of thirty-five cents a year or less, with an average of 1.3 per family. Thirty-eight per cent of the families take religious publications, and 37 per cent, agricultural papers.

The commonest forms of recreation besides reading are card-playing, dancing, moving-picture shows, and music. Of all the families visited, 47 per cent reported card-playing as a form of diversion, although some of these families play but little. Thirty-three per cent of the families were opposed

to card-playing. Thirty-seven per cent had members who attend dances, and 25 per cent were opposed to dancing. In a few families, daughters had begun to dance in spite of the opposition of parents, and the opposition had died out. This probably accounts for the greater proportion who are opposed to card-playing than to dancing. (This situation is interesting when compared with that in the German-Lutheran settlement of farmers northeast of the village where the preacher is unalterably opposed to dancing, but sanctions both beer-drinking and card-playing.)

Moving pictures were shown at the opera house at least twice a week during the year, and four times a week part of the time. There were about 68 per cent of the families which reported that parents or adults attended the "movies," an average of 18.7 performances per family during the year. There were about 56 per cent that had children or young people who attended, with an average of 33.4 during the year. Very few theatrical companies come to town, partly because of the inadequacy of the opera house. Fifty per cent of the families reported that adults had attended the two or three shows that had visited the village, and 39 per cent that young people had attended them. The lyceum course is held in the schoolhouse each winter, and is well attended. The brass band gave a series of three or four concerts in the opera house during the season of 1912-1913, and 47 per cent of the families reported attendance at one or more.

One hundred thirteen families, or 56 per cent of the total, reported musical instruments in the home. This proportion is a bit misleading, because in many houses the instruments are used but little. Thirty-eight per cent of the families had pianos; 15 per cent, organs; 17 per cent, violins; 14 per cent, phonographs; 8 per cent, banjos, mandolins, or guitars; and 16 per cent, band instruments. The brass band has a paid leader who also teaches music in the school and who plies the trade of a tailor on the side. There has also been organized a juvenile band, the members of which were industriously attempting to learn to play their various instruments during the summer that this investigation was under way.

During the summer the most noticeable recreation is motoring. Of the families visited, 34, or 16.9 per cent, own automobiles. The total number in the town reaches 50 or 60. Besides daily rides out on the prairie, parties frequently take long trips over Sundays. There is no good lake near at hand and auto parties often go 60 to 70 miles south into the lake region near Detroit, for a week-end outing, and for a little fishing. Most of the people who can afford it spend vacations of two or three weeks during the summer at the lakes. The continual absence of a large proportion of the inhabitants and the constant use of automobiles by those who own them practically preclude social activity during the summer. The coming of the automobile during the past few years was assigned as a reason for the segregation of the villagers into distinct social groups. The

number of villagers who keep driving horses was found to be 34, the same as the number that own automobiles. About half of these keep teams; the others, single horses.

Other out-of-door sports are not much in evidence. Baseball is played a little, and occasional games are held with surrounding villages on Sundays during the summer. Eleven per cent of the families of the village have boys who play Sunday baseball. There are two or three tennis courts, but only one is kept in good condition and used frequently. The high school has football, baseball, and basket-ball teams.

#### MEANS OF LIVELIHOOD OF TOWN PEOPLE

The following table shows the occupations of the heads of 182 families. This table does not give an adequate idea of the importance of the sawmill as a source of employment, because many of the mill hands are temporary residents living at boarding houses, and were not included in the survey.

	Heads of families
Retired farmers .....	21
Merchants .....	21
Professional men .....	15
Laborers .....	12
Sawmill .....	12
Contractors and carpenters.....	11
Government positions ( federal, county, and city ).....	10
Liverymen and teamsters.....	9
Railroad work (including station).....	8
Real estate .....	6
Active farmers .....	5
Banking .....	4
Clerks in stores.....	4
Elevator managers .....	4
Retired from business.....	3
Saloon keepers and bar tenders.....	3
Threshing outfits .....	3
Manufacturing (other than sawmill).....	3
Barbers .....	2
Butchers .....	2
Tailors .....	2
Painters .....	2
Automobiles (garage and repairing).....	2
Blacksmiths .....	2
Engineers and machinists.....	2
Janitors .....	2

	Heads of families
Newspaper publishers .....	2
Tinsmith .....	1
Hotel clerk .....	1
Cement business .....	1
Well-driller .....	1
Insurance .....	1
Photographer .....	1
Butter-maker .....	1
Plumber .....	1
Pool room .....	1
Mason .....	1

---

 182

By "retired farmers" is meant those who have actually retired from active life. They constitute only 11 per cent of the families reported, although 127, or 63 per cent, were raised on farms. Government positions are important in this town because it is a county seat. It should be remembered that the figures apply only to families visited during the survey; that they include about four fifths of the permanent residents; and that there are always a number of temporary residents, especially while the sawmill is in operation, that are not included at all. Employment in the less skilled occupations is not very regular, owing not only to the shutting-down of the sawmill in winter, but also to the fact that other out-of-door occupations are suspended during the cold months. For this reason wages are much lower in winter than in summer. Only 62.2 per cent reported that they had worked full time during the previous year. The average number of days of work for all was 270.

There is but little opportunity in Ada for the younger generation to find profitable employment, and this accounts for the noticeable efflux of sons and daughters to other places. This is clearly shown with regard to sons over 18 years of age by the following statement:

	Number	Per cent of total
Sons living at home and working in Ada.....	37	20.0
Sons working in country.....	29	15.6
Sons working in cities and towns other than Ada .....	86	46.2
Sons farming in home community.....	19	10.2
Sons farming at a distance.....	15	8.0
Total .....	186	100.0

Of the 37 sons living at home and working in the village, 12 are clerks, 4 work in the sawmill, and 2 are carpenters; the others are in a variety of occupations. There are also 9 daughters living at home and working in the village. Three of these are in the cigar factory, 2 in the hotel, one is a barber in her father's shop, and the others are clerks or stenographers.

The 86 sons working in other cities and towns represent 55 families, or over 25 per cent of those visited. Their principal occupations, with the number in each, are shown in the following table:

Clerks and salesmen.....	9
Merchants .....	7
Engineers .....	5
Lawyers .....	5
Contractors and carpenters.....	5
Common laborers .....	5
Banking .....	4
Printing and publishing.....	3
Machinists .....	3

The foregoing statement accounts for but little over half of the sons working in other cities. The remainder are in too great a variety of occupations to enumerate. It should be mentioned, however, that there is one of each of the following: doctor, professional ball player, grand opera singer, and artist.

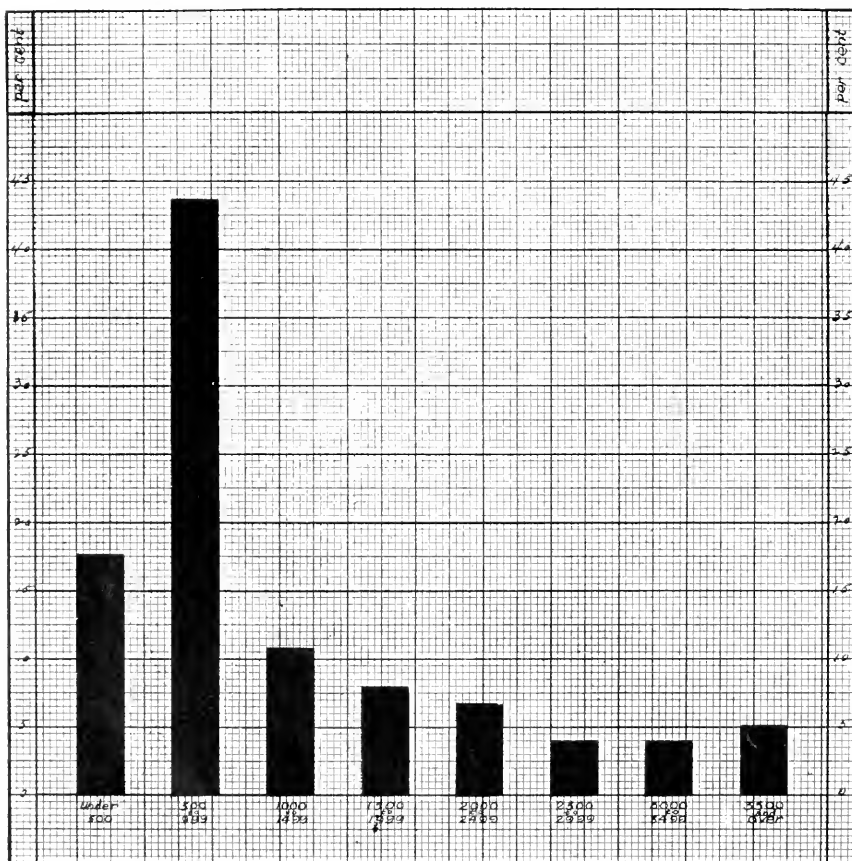
Only 14 girls were reported as away from home and working in cities. Eight of these were clerks, 2 were nurses, 2 were telegraph operators, one a milliner, and one was doing housework. There were also 28 daughters representing 25 families reported as teaching, which therefore forms the principal occupation of girls who are gainfully employed.

#### ANNUAL INCOMES

The annual income of the head of the family was ascertained from about seven eighths of all families visited. In some cases the returns were estimated, and are only approximately correct. The following table shows the number with incomes in five-hundred-dollar groups:

Annual income	Number	Per cent of total
Under \$500.....	31	17.6
From \$500 to \$999.....	77	43.7
From \$1,000 to \$1,499.....	19	10.8
From \$1,500 to \$1,999.....	14	8.0
From \$2,000 to \$2,499.....	12	6.8
From \$2,500 to \$2,999.....	7	4.0
From \$3,000 to \$3,499.....	7	4.0
\$3,500 and over.....	9	5.1
Total .....	176	100.0

Sixty-one and three-tenths per cent have incomes of less than \$1,000, and 43.7 per cent have incomes between \$500 and \$1,000. There were nine people among those visited who claimed incomes of \$3,500 or over. The average income means but little, owing to the fact that a few large incomes raise it inordinately. By eliminating the two largest incomes, both well over \$5,000, the aggregate income of 174 heads of families was \$202,300, or an average of \$1,162. The mode, or point of greatest frequency—and this is more significant— may be said to lie between \$700 and \$800.



Incomes of Heads of Village Families (Per Cent of Total in Each \$500 Group)

In addition to the incomes of heads of families, housewives and sons and daughters living at home reported considerable incomes. The principal methods by which housewives add to family incomes are the selling of milk and eggs, renting of rooms, and taking-in washing. There were 49 families in which the housewife added to the income in these ways, with

average annual earnings of \$109.20. There were also 36 families with children living at home who earned on the average \$557 per family. There were 62.2 per cent of the families having vegetable gardens, many of which are small, and the value of truck raised ranges from \$5 to \$50; 28.4 per cent keep chickens; 11.4 per cent, cows; and 6 families living on the outskirts of the village keep hogs and thus raise part of their own meat supply.

#### SOCIALISM

Ada has a little body of socialists who are affiliated with the Socialist Party and who have been holding meetings since 1902. They began as a club which made a study of socialism and most of the members soon became socialists. This organization meets once a month, and has two special meetings each year. There are thirty-two members of the local organization, ten of whom are farmers, but the average attendance is only about eight. It has no president and elects a chairman for each meeting. At the meetings general discussions of socialism are held, and there are generally two or three social meetings during the year. A holiday supper or dance is generally given, and an annual picnic is held during the summer. These functions are exceptional in that the farmers and town people mix freely. As one of the leaders put it, "Socialism seems to be the only bond that brings country and town people together socially." Occasionally arrangements are made to have some outside speaker address open meetings.

Since its organization in 1902 socialism has not gained in Ada; it has been gaining steadily, however, in the country, and in other villages in the county. In fact there are eleven locals in the county, some of which are fairly strong.

## SUMMARY

1. The farmers of this community depend mainly on grain crops. Wheat is still the most important crop in value, but the greatest gains of recent years have been in the production of barley and oats. At present the culture of corn is increasing very rapidly. Cattle-raising and dairying are developing, but not so rapidly as one might wish. The dependence on grain crops means a more or less fluctuating income from year to year and has resulted in partial exhaustion of the soil. These facts have an important bearing not only on the economic well-being and standard of living of the farmers, but also on the social activities of the community.

2. The long distances between farmhouses, the mixture of nationalities and religions, the coming and going of renters, the cold winters, and the long hours of work all stand in the way of the development of social intercourse among farmers. The lack of sociability in this community is very noticeable, except in a few small sections. The organization of the Farmers' Club was a move in the right direction, but one of the principal things that the community needs is something to bring the farmers together to a greater extent so that they may learn to know each other better and benefit from the broadening influence of contact with their fellows, and thereby make farm life more interesting and attractive.

3. On the whole the farmers are not well organized economically. The creamery is about the only organization of importance, but this does not play as important a rôle in their lives or add as much to their economic well-being as creameries in communities where dairying is more important. The "Farmers' Elevator" is not a farmers' elevator; no live stock had been shipped coöperatively when this survey was made; there had been no coöperative purchase of supplies. No general rule can be laid down as to how far the farmers of any single community should go in these respects, but it should be borne in mind that the activities enumerated above have been developed in scores of other communities to both the economic and social benefit of all farmers concerned.

4. Although the facilities for marketing farm products are fairly adequate, there are certain weak points in the present system. The flour mill has an important and beneficial influence on the local wheat market. The local elevators offer a satisfactory market for grains, although some savings might be attained through a coöperative company, especially as such a company could purchase supplies in carload lots for farmer members. In the marketing of butter, too much butter is made on the farm, and not enough cream is hauled to the creamery. If more were hauled to the creamery, that institution could make a better quality of butter at a lower cost per pound, and therefore pay more for butter fat than it is now paying. Conditions are ripe for coöperative marketing of live stock. Eggs are still



traded at the village stores, with little attention to production, grading, etc., a situation from which but few communities of the State have begun to emerge.

5. The school situation is improving, but there are still comparatively few children who ever finish the eighth grade, and the number who go beyond that is almost negligible. The people feel that farms are too far apart and the population too sparse to make consolidated schools possible. It is only through education that advancement along other lines can be attained, and for that reason the subject should be given even more attention than at present.

TABLE IX  
COMPARISON OF VILLAGE AND COUNTRY

	PER CENT OF ALL FAMILIES VISITED	
	In village	In country
Hot-water, steam, or hot-air heating plant.....	16	3
Electric lights.....	60	0
Electric flatirons.....	45	0
Vacuum cleaners.....	8	0
Running water in house.....	55	2
Telephone.....	58	67
Bathroom in house.....	18	1.5
Washing machines.....	50	61
Screened porches.....	15	3.5
Employ maid for house work.....	18	26
Average weekly wage: village, \$3.57; country, \$4.16		
Hire dressmakers.....	48	32
Represented in ladies' aid societies.....	41	40
Represented in Sunday schools.....	45	23
Represented in young peoples' societies.....	29	19
Represented in lodges.....	27	14
Represented in literary societies.....	14	0
Represented in W. C. T. U.....	14	0
Subscribe to city daily paper.....	58	43
Subscribe to local paper.....	83	84
Subscribe to first-class magazines.....	53	22
Average number per family: village, 2.8; country, 1.9		
Subscribe to cheap magazines.....	22	34
Subscribe to religious publications.....	38	35
Subscribe to agricultural papers.....	27	76
Play cards.....	47	46
Opposed to card-playing.....	33	25
Attend dances.....	37	*41
Opposed to dancing.....	25	27
Adults attend theatricals.....	50	14
Children attend theatricals.....	39	20
Have pianos.....	38	6.5
Have organs.....	15	33
Have phonographs.....	14	24
Have Automobiles.....	17	6

\*Most members of farmers' families attend dances very seldom, perhaps only once or twice a year.

6. The number of stores in the village is much larger than is necessary to supply efficiently the population of the section. No store has as much as \$40,000 annual business, and the cost of doing business is high. Some of the stores are neat and attractive, however, give good service, and a few carry surprisingly complete and attractive stocks of merchandise.

7. The feeling among the merchants against the mail-order business is largely unwarranted, because it appears that only 52.5 per cent of all families visited ever buy from catalogue houses, and that their average purchases amount to only \$42.04 per year. The whole mail-order business amounts to only about three per cent of the total business of those stores which are open to this sort of competition.

8. In many ways the social life of the village is very pleasant, and the people form close friendships. They are divided, however, into well-defined groups, with the result that each group is rather self-centered and self-sufficient. In view of the lack of contact with the outside world, a more general social life in the village would undoubtedly aid in developing wider interests. There is very little social mingling between the village folk and the farmers.

9. On the whole the village people have a surprising number of comforts in their homes, and live in attractive houses. The cost of living is decidedly low as compared with city life and people with moderate means enjoy certain comforts that would be impossible with the same incomes in larger cities. This is one of the principal conveniences of small-town life, although, on the other hand, the small town offers but little employment for the young people, thus forcing them to move to larger cities to gain a livelihood. There is a much more noticeable movement of young people from the village to the city than from the farm to the city.







[illegible]

PRINTED IN U S A



